



THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

HENRY G. BARNETT





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THE ROOF OF THE WORLD AND OTHER POEMS

BY
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TO
MY FATHER AND MOTHER

THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

*When the tasks of the day are ended and the
lamps of the House are lit,
And the chambers are filled with laughter where
the lords of the dwelling sit,
When the cares of the living day like dusty flags
are furled,
I climb the mounting stairway that leads to the
Roof of the World.*

*Apart from the world's confusion and din I sit
aloof,
Content to dream in silence in the peace of the
world's wide roof:
But the murmurous hum of voices comes up from
the rooms below
And fills my ears with music and my heart with a
kindling glow.*

*The stars are near above me and friendly their
faces seem:
Like neighbors they sit with me as I sit on the roof
and dream;
They stoop like giant kinsmen and take me by the
hand
And lead me unresisting along their goodly land.*

*When the hour of dreams is ended I turn from the
roof again
To join my human comrades in the rooms of the
House of Men:*

*For my heart responds to my fellows (their words
like music purl)
And answers the God who guardeth above the
Roof of the World.*

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OCTOBER

WHEN the bare October wind
Goes tramping the scarlet hills,
And the leaves like gusts of crackling fire
Blow wherever the wild wind wills ;
When the night with floods of filtered light
My narrow valley fills ;

When the agate moon floats high,
Like a berg from a shattered floe,
And the moonbeams melt in the torrent-streams
Like flakes of phantom snow,
While the constellations heap their drift
On the glacial plains below ;

When the silver starshine strews
With frost the Milky Way,
And the elfin cataract blows a mist
On the lake's quicksilver-gray,
Lest the wind go wild with the Circean smile
Its turbid eyes betray :

Then I leave the hills to the wind
And the stars to their white abode,
And I lay by summer's gypsy pack
And autumn's wandering load ;
I forsake the wild world's wintry track ;
I am through with the open road.

I close my door to the world ;
The scenes of the day retire ;

I rise on the firelight's borrowed wings
To the lands of old desire ;
For the Phœnix soul of the ages sings
Through the lips of my open fire.

Through the mouth of my open hearth
Infinite voices come
From the ends of the years, of the race, of the
earth,
From the ages men count dumb,
Repeating the manifold messages
Of the dead millenniums.

I hear the caveman's raucous cries
Along the mountainside ;
I see the wave that hunts his cave
And robs him of his bride ;
I sense his hoarse and helpless rage
And the strength of the taunting tide.

I see the ports and crowded quays
Of purple-cradled Tyre ;
The winged winds leagued with bold Xerxes
To light the Attic pyre ;
And Rome inflamed with the burning lees
That dregged her cup of fire.

There, armed with terror, goes
Philip's restive son ;
I feel the hurricane that blows
From the foaming Rubicon,
And the planet rocked with volcanic throes
'Neath the step of Napoleon.

I ride the thirsty main
Which Sahara's caravels seek ;
I pitch my camp on the burning beach
By the fires of the Bedouin sheiks,
Where the derelict caravans idly bleach
And the soul of the desert speaks.

I see Jerusalem
Ere the Passover sun has set,
And the smoking temple-fires that burn,
And the haze on Olivet,
And the glowing coals on the morning beach
Of blue Genessaret.

I see the naked arms
That rein the chafing forge,
The fiery-foaming steeds of steel
That circuit the planet's marge,
And the molten ore whose torrents roar
Through the factory's fiery gorge.

The wind cries on my roof ;
Red grows my hearth and dark ;
I see the crimson torches flare
In Nero's guilty park,
And against the blood-red cross the face
Of lily-white Jean d'Arc ;

The livid fagots mock
Ridley's translucent face ;

The fires of Florence aureole
Savonarola's grace:
How fair and luminous they are —
The martyrs of our race!

The ashes are white on my hearth,
White as an ashen sea,
White as the driven universe
Before earth came to be,
Or ever the world like a star-fish swam
From the spawning nebulæ.

I am linked to the infinite past —
Fused by its heat, whirled
On its central wheel, lit by my fire
Through all skies, and headlong hurled
In a shower of embers, higher and higher,
To the shores of the first-born world.

This is the burden of speech
That leaps from the burning oak;
But as melodies that cannot be held
In music's most intricate yoke,—
As vows that melt on a lover's lips,—
Their speech dissolves in smoke.

SUNSET ON LAKE HOWARD

THE skies rain fire and mist among the orange
trees

Which turn to swirling nebulae of bloom ;

Then glowing orbs emerge against the leafy
gloom,

Like gypsy stars which yesternight camped in the
Pleiades.

But all the constellations which swing round the
shore

Cannot withhold the sun at dusk of day ;

For like a homing comet he gaily wings away,

While crowding convoys follow him and clean his
path before.

Then rise the spirits of the Indian braves

Whose bodies lie beneath the silent lake,

Erect their wigwams in the sun's red wake

And build their campfires o'er the ruddy waves.

Their lithe forms mingle with the blazing logs ;

The purple smoke blends with their shifting
shapes ;

Like fire their camp flames up, like fire escapes

In phantom light and insubstantial fogs.

Then rest the spirits of the Indian dead ;

The sad waves stroke their foreheads where they
lie ;

The golden planets in the trees descry

Their calm reflection in the stars o'erhead.

THE ST. JOHN'S RIVER

PRINCE of the fair dominion of pine and stately
palm,
I hold my feudal domains through strife and
tropic calm;
I hold within my fiefdom the proud peninsula,
My brave and princely province, the Feud of
Florida.

I build no frowning towers, no cliffs of beetling
stone;
I keep no armored knighthood (my word is law
alone);
I hold my castle safely (my moat is black and
deep);
I scorn the lords who hide them behind their don-
jon keep.

The craven Colorado, he builds his canyon walls,
And flings his foeman backward by turbid water-
falls;
The haughty Hudson crouches behind his Pali-
sades;
But I dwell undisturbed behind my moated Ever-
glades.

My vassals bring me tribute and lay it at my feet;
Amidst the storm of conflict they never sound re-
treat;
They come bare-browed and gallant from out the
Coastal Plain
And kneel before my dais and owe me suzerain.

My liegemen bring me honor and tribute manifold
Of homely gems and caskets o'er-heaped with mel-
low gold;

But all the wealth and homage and loyal fealty,
I hold them at the bidding of my overlord, the Sea.

My Emperor the Sea rules o'er a wide domain;
He draws his tribute from the Yangtse to the
Seine;

From Euphrates to Danube, from Elbe to Ama-
zon,

He claims the homage of all lords beneath the sun.

The San Joaquin dwells proudly behind his strong
defense;

The Nile o'er-runs his flood-plains to vaunt his
puissance;

The Rhine compels the Neckar to bend the vassal-
knee;

But all bow in submission to their Emperor, the
Sea.

My king, the Sea, is monarch, and mighty is his
reign;

He holds the wealth of nations within his vast do-
main;

But the whisper rings the planet, from Po to
Amazon,

That he loveth best of all his little Prince St.
John.

THE CHIMES OF ST. MICHAEL'S

ST. MICHAEL'S chimes are calyx-bells:
Their notes are lightly shod
As songs of lyric asphodels
In the singing fields of God.

St. Michael's chimes are shallop-bells:
Their silver corols nod
Like the rhythmic-riding caravels
On the lilting seas of God.

GHOSTS OF MANASSAS

WE drank of the flagons of bitter disease;
We drained the black flask to its deadliest lees;
From cisterns of sadness our draught we drew
That ye might taste of the cup of the free,
And drink of the waters of liberty;
Have ye poisoned the wells we digged for you?

We dragged the morasses of grief and pain;
We leveled the marshes of harsh disdain;
We waded through poverty's mire and slough:
That following our footsteps your hands might
lay
O'er the lowlands a noble and clean highway;
Have ye paved the road which we cleared for
you?

We pulled down the pillars of peace round our
head,
And razed the dwellings our fathers builded;
We ravaged the gardens of gladness that grew:
That ye might erect of the stones we strewed
A fairer and statelier habitude;
Have ye fashioned the house we planned for
you?

We swam through rivers of woe and blood;
We sailed o'er destruction's flagellate flood,
And oceans of sorrow our vessels drew:
That ye might adventure a kindlier shore
And continents past our horizon explore;
Have ye voyaged the seas we charted for you?

We yielded to anguish our ultimate breath ;
We choked in the murky miasmas of death ;
 We died where the venomous vapors blew :
That ye might escape the tempests of strife,
And inspire the airs of a fuller life ;
 Have ye breathed the clean winds we freed for
 you ?

PIONEERS

THE pioneers who mark new shores for men
Are like strong swimmers heaved upon the crest
Of billows born amidst the distant ken
Of human history's oceanic breast.

Lifted leeward from far, historic seas,
Reared on the tides of ages, at their full,
They rise above the surging centuries,
Urged by the thoughts of minds innumerable:

Columbus, poised above the unknown shore,
By myriad human aspirations hurled;
Napoleon, raised aloft the clamorous roar
Of racial breakers whose foam filled the world;
Luther, the oaken-hearted, flung before
The tide which round the centuries had swirled.

The timorous spirits reared atop that flood
Will not out-fling their shrinking souls from
thence;
They wait the giant souls of valiant blood
To leap and mark for them new continents.

Raised on that tide, importunate and vast,
They scan with fearful eye the misty lee;
They tremble back, with mind and soul aghast,
And sink again into the ancient sea.

But those strong souls whom bolder moods inspire,
They do not bound the future by the past;
They sweep the shadowed shore with eyes of fire,
And with resistless leap their souls they cast

Beyond the breakers' loud and futile roar ;
Beyond the human race's inmost shoal
They hurl them on the undiscovered shore
And claim new kingdoms for the human soul.

Angelo draws aside immortal veils ;
Washington heals a nation's livid scars ;
Shakespeare imprisons Albion's deathless gales ;
Copernicus strides, singing, through the stars ;
Magellan dares to orb the earth with sails ;
And Farady lets down the lightning bars.

Their daring minds hew out a deathless track,
Where human mind and flesh have never been ;
And as they push the shelving coast-line back,
The sea of human spirits volleys in.

NEIGHBORS

THE men who live in Sirius and Mars,
And the children who play on the wandering
stars —

I count them as foreigners to me;
But to all who are human my heart is spoused,
And I know them well, for I am housed
On the self-same street with humanity.

Many a generous neighbor I have —
Mongol and Ottoman, Briton and Slav,
Brahmin and Christian and Saracen;
From my open door to the long street's end,
I reckon each man my comrade and friend,
For a neighbor am I to the race of men.

From my window I watch my neighbors pass,
Peasant and prince (but I know no class)—
Folk of every temper and mind;
And my heart leaps up to behold each face,
For I am a neighbor to all the race
And a fellow-townsmen of all mankind.

MICHAEL'S TRUMPETS

I

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous great;
He hangs it on the tower-wall
Beside the City Gate.*

Michael loves the country
Beyond the mighty Town,
And when he hies him out to course
The long roads of the universe,
He takes his trumpet down.

He takes his trumpet down,
And lifting to his mouth
Its massive lips he marches forth
And blows a blast which east and north
Echo to west and south.

It thrills the universe
Throughout its last domains
With an imponderable crash,
As when the hoofs of Saturn clash
Beneath its flaccid reins,

As when the wheels of planets
Collide in courses blue,
And comet-drivers, chariots lost,
From out the smoking holocaust,
With foreheads white, issue.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous large,
And when its blast rings challenge,
The meteor-corsairs charge.*

But to the Twins it seems
Caressing as a lute,
As dulcet-clean and haunting-sweet
As summer winds that finger wheat,
Or a wandering singer's flute.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous great,
And no archangel save himself
Can heave aloft its weight.*

He steps into his ship
Beside the river-quay ; -
He tracks the banks with dappled spray
Until he gains the Milky Way,
His favorite inland sea :

The gentle inland sea
Where live the fisher-stars ;
The lake whereat he stationed them
To seek pearls for his diadem
Along the shallow bars.

He hails them where they toil
Among their mighty seines,
Their bodies strong and shining-wet,
And tangled in their dripping nets
Molluscs like clouds of rain.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous great
It chafes the limpid Milky Way
To tempests passionate.*

The white shores of the sea
Are by the fishers tracked,
But Michael's tempest smites them all,
With a roar like the rush of waterfalls
Or a foaming cataract.

He stands upon the shore
And looks out into space;
The earth is like a flake of foam
Or a floating mist, half-solved in gloam,
Wavering in its place.

He sees the burning discus
The agile comet hurls;
And Mars, with youthful face aglow,
A pygmy runner, on tiptoe,
Among the giant worlds.

Stars are like thistle-pods
Drifting against the blue;
And constellations fade like mists
That ring a virgin valley's wrist,
Melting out of view.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous vast;
The universe reverberates
Beneath its awful blast.*

Michael loads his vessel
With pure and priceless pearls
And cloths of richest hues the Twins
Dragging the sea have gathered in
From sunken shipwrecked worlds:

Sails of whitest linen
And purple silks and gray —
Rich cargoes, shipped from ancient towns,
In fated worlds which had gone down
Upon the Milky Way.

Michael lifts his trumpet,
And blows a mighty blast;
Wing-like his vessel westward flies,
And soon against the pallid skies
Dissolves his lofty mast;

Leading further westward
Against the cosmic sun,
To gather up the treasures
Of the innumerable seas
Beyond the horizon.

II

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous small;
He hangs it by the tower-gate
Inside the City Wall.*

Michael loves the billows
That fray a drop of rain;

He leaves the Town at noon-day white
Within a ship of red starlight
To sail the tiny main.

For a drop of rain is a sea
To the bold infusories,
Where kingdoms dwell, and continents
Quail under wheeling firmaments
And shifting dynasties.

A drop of rain is a sea,
And free its billows roll
'Mid isles where the amœba dwells
And the polyps float their buoy-bells
In channels combed with shoals.

A cloud hung in the sky
Is a cosmic nebula,
And a gust of rain, on its earthward race,
Is like a universe, shot through space,
To the animalcula.

There are storms o'er a drop of rain
Through which winged tempests fly;
And the light from an arching lily's chalice
Gleams, an aurora borealis,
Against its polar sky.

Light autumnal zephyrs
Like wild tornadoes are ;

They make the mariners' courage quail
And strike fear like a stinging gale
To the animalcula.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous small,
And no archangel save himself
Can hear its blast at all.*

Michael blows his trumpet
Above the windy seas,
And a thousand thousand violet sails
Come, crowded to their white gunwales
With brave infusories.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous small,
And no archangel save himself
Can hear its loudest call.*

Michael grasps his trumpet
And lifts it to his lips,
And answering his valiant blast
The sky-line mottles with the masts
Of the infusorial ships.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous frail,
But its blast bestirs a navy
Of a thousand thousand sails.*

They crowd about his ship
With naval gallantry,
And following his foaming wake,
They orb their oceanic lake
In galleon-pageantry.

Michael blows his trumpet ;
The nimble fleets disperse,
To ring the ocean's margin round
And gird the coastal lines that bound
Their billowy universe.

Michael leaves behind him
The infusorial sea ;
And swift his ship of starlight red,
By pygmy vessels piloted,
Sails toward the City's quay.

Far away to eastward
Heaves the drop of rain,
When Michael, the Trumpeteer,
Leaves his boat at the City's pier
And enters the Town again.

*Michael hath a trumpet,
And it is wondrous light ;
Its blast is soft as lilies' lips
Or touch of satin white.*

LAD O' MY LOVE

A CONCOURSE of angels one starry night
To earth from heaven flew,
Holding with fingers fair and light
The little hands of you.

Through the lucid seasons, by my side,
Twelve golden years you grew;
Merry and gentle, you felt no pride,
Childlike, no ill you knew.

Your little lithe form was fair and clean
Like the boy John's used to be
When he ran through the lakeside's lambent sheen
By windy Galilee.

So winsome and gentle and brave you were,
No wonder the angels knew
And called you home, little wanderer,
When God rang His curfew.

Up there in your Father's home on the hill
Beside that country's sea,
I wonder, my lad, if you are still
The boy you used to be.

Will you be a lad on the streets of the skies
When I come up to you?
Will the laughter of boyhood play in your eyes,
And boyhood's beautiful blue?

Will you sail your boats on the river's wave
And the lake of opal hue?
By the jasper gate on the city's pave,
Will you play as you used to do?

Will you play in the fields with the boys and girls
By the light of the lamps of dew?
Will you wade through the river's plashing pearls
In the shining city's view?

Will you bind the grasses the gardeners scythe
And pluck the stars they strew?
Will your little heart be quick and blithe
And sweet and simple, too?

Will your voice ring out in laughter glad
When I come up to you?
Will you love me then as you loved me, lad,
When your life was young and new?

MY LODESTAR

I WAS anchored in the deep,
Sailing not, nor yet asleep,
Drifting like an idle ship on tropic seas ;
All the bold sea-faring stars
Sailing past heaven's coastwise bars
Could not rouse me from my aimless vagaries.

But one night I saw afar
Through my reef a glowing star,
A star of ruby brightness and diaphanous as dew ;
Transcendently bright among
All the starry gems it hung,
The face, my love, the face, the lustrous face of
you.

A shock of joy ran through my ship,
A message flashed from lip to lip,
And instantly arose my erstwhile idle crew ;
The canvas pinions were unfurled,
And through the evanescent world
On wings of luminous desire my vessel flew.

Then mightily you drew me on ;
Fleet as the sun pursues the dawn,
My speeding vessel coursed, though scarce a
zephyr blew ;
No need had I for compass then,
Or fathom-line or chart of men,
So irresistible my lodestar was and true.

I shot past foaming tempests' claws
And lightnings' talons red, because
My lodestar was a magnet and steadily it drew ;
Oh, wondrous was the voyage, sweet,
That brought me bounding to your feet,
Where I anchored, love, forever, within the heart
of you.

NEEDLE PAGODA

*Beyond the ancient City,
Upheld by mountain hands,
Its slender silhouette reared high
Against the immemorial sky,
Needle Pagoda stands.*

The seamstress-sun bends lowly
 (Her bright hair hides her head)
And runs through the eye of the Needle
 Her slender silken thread.

Then her fingers seize the Needle
 (Which the silken threads pass through)
And she binds the walls of the heavens
 To the walls of Hang-chow-foo.

She binds the walls of the City
 To the walls of the somber sky
By the immaterial filaments
 Of light and mystery.

She works a scarf of shadows
 For the throat of the sleeping storm,
And girdles of red like cashmere
 To gird the lake's light form.

And she fashions mantles of crimson
 Lighter than veils of air,
And cords for the hems of the garments
 That the wistful hillsides wear.

The moon, apprentice-seamstress,
Bends over the hills at night
And works a pensive pattern
Of shadow shot with light;

She bends above the waters
(Her maiden head is bowed)
Patching the lake's blue mantle
With filmy shades of cloud;

Knitting with scarlet tissues,
Purple and white and blue,
The walls of the ancient heavens
To the walls of Hang-chow-foo.

*Beyond the ancient City,
Among the mouldering lands,
Thridded by red and silver light
And filaments of gold and white,
Needle Pagoda stands.*

THE BREAKWATER *

THE Netherlands build high their dykes, to breast
the scourging scud ;

Cherbourg, her massive bulwarks, to stem the
virile main ;

But I resist the prairie-lands, which smite me like
a flood,—

I am the bronzed breakwater of the oceanic
plain.

The storms blow from the prairies — strive to
flay me and consume,

To bare my granite bosom, to probe my ancient
lure,

My adamantine bulkheads, they are white with
foam and spume,

But my foundations still remain inflexibly se-
cure.

The plains, from hot horizons and from basins
far and strange,

Speak like a pampas-surf, in whispers blurred
and bold ;

Like continental tides, they lash against my
Frontal Range,

To tear away my flesh and bare my skeleton of
gold.

* The Rocky Mountain Range.

The lonely prairie-beaches are bestrewn with
 silent graves,
 And many a shattered Argosy lies stranded on
 the shore
Of Jasons who adventured o'er the hungry mesa-
 waves
To seek the Fleece which Stratton † found deep-
 buried in my ore.

† Pioneer gold-miner of the Pike's Peak Region.

THE NURSERY

THE sea is a nursery :
(Each wave is a little child) ;
It is paneled with porphyry
And the floor is emerald-tiled.

Oh ! the sea is a nursery :
(Each wave is a little child) ;
It is ceilinged with lazulite,
With tessellate lily-flags aisled.

The sea is a nursery :
(Each wave is a little child) ;
It is windowed with indigo mists,
With coral atolls peristyled.

Oh ! the sea is a nursery :
(Each wave is a little child) ;
Encradled the little waves lie,
With laughter their days are beguiled.

WHOSO

Whoso bows down to deities of dust,
He sinks his soul into a heathen hell;
Whoso despoils a human heart, through lust,
He chains his spirit to a felon's cell.

Whoso, to serve mankind, spurns sterile ease,
He permeates men's hearts like fragrant leaven;
Whoso sows barren lives with ministries,
He plants on earth the garden seeds of heaven.

Whoso flings by like dross his spirit's youth,
He sells him to remorse, the senile slave;
Whoso pollutes the wells of faith and truth,
He digs his mind a stark, inhuman grave.

Whoso communes with soil and sea and sky,
He shapes above his head a beauteous dome;
Whoso betroths the soul of charity,
He builds his heart an incorruptive home.

Whoso strides o'er men's hearts, in malice shod,
He robs his soul of its divinest breath;
Whoso rejects the overtures of God,
He yields his spirit to a servile death.

Whoso inures his will to discipline,
He arms his mind against the sternest strife;
Whoso welcomes the Kingly Guest within,
He breathes the airs of everlasting life.

ISOLATION

Thine eyes are dark and luminous as are
Deep winter skies hung with a crescent censer;
They glow like fireless planets seen afar,
Only more coldly blue, graver, intenser.

Thine eyes as strange and straying are
As frozen shells of drifted stellar plasm;
As well might I aspire to reach that star
As seek to arch this vaster human chasm.

FIREFLIES AND MOTHS

UNDER the still, narcotic skies
In sultry sleep the farmland lies,
Into an opiate slumber kissed
By June, the subtle hypnotist ;
Deft-fingered clouds pass their light hands
Across the unresisting lands,
And petals from the sun-fields blown
Upon the languorous air are strewn ;
While here my sluggish watch I keep
Among the furrows while they sleep.
Yon Gothic pile of fen and wood
Since the Mediæval years has stood,
And from its loft of fluted limbs
Reverberate deep forest hymns.
The river, like a leopard's trail,
Eludes the hill and tracks the vale.
Deep in the marsh the otter sage
Has built his secret hermitage.
The insects, idling o'er the bars,
Finger their dully-tuned guitars.
The bob-o-link, to while the day,
Pipes at his meager roundelay,
And answering his careless call,
The robin laughs her madrigal.
Within the bleached wigwams of hay
The lizards sleep the hours away.
The ploughman's dragging harrows rouse
The mumbling acres as they drowse ;
The furrows sigh in dull protest,
Then turn in deeper stupor pressed.

The soil from sky to sky has quaffed
Midsummer's numbing poppy draught.
And oh! my heart would be again
Back in the city of women and men.

Back in the town where a myriad feet
Pæan the Anthem of the Street;
Back where each artery intersects
A thousand ganglia complex;
Back where my blood first caught its beat,
And my soul seized fire from the town's white heat.
Oh! a multiple human host is ta'en
In the intricate mesh of the city's seine!
The town is a myriad-harboured sea,
Restive with tides of humanity.
The town is a treasure, a banquet-board,
A helmet of gold, a sheathen sword;
The town is a trench to be shelled and won,
A guerdon to prize, a bauble to shun;
The town is a conflict, the town is a goal,
The town is a sensitive-bodied soul.
Oh! my pinions exult in the hurricanes
That blow through the city's tortuous lanes!
Before dusk drowns me in slumber again
I shall be back in the city of men.
When the mist-veined sun flames red I shall stand
On the resonant Bridge of the Cumberland;
I shall see the city throw back her cloak
Of damask fog and cashmere smoke,
Draw close her shawl of shimmering night
Broidered with countless pearls of light,
Lift her tiara, set with stones,

And reign in splendor from her throne.
Like a wilding eagle my spirit shall fly
Across the disk of the city's sky;
But my mind shall leap like a hart set free
When the walls of the city close around me;
Deep in her dungeon my body shall lie,
Chained in her free-forged fetters for aye.
Oh! but my spirit seeks to be
Back where life flows red and free
Through the auricle of humanity!

WHOM GOD HATH MET

THE stalwart souls whom God hath met and challenged by His life,
Go not, to meet the morning, with cowardly complaining;
Nor limp of indecision, nor cynical disdaining;
They court the martial turmoil, and prize the Spartan training
That disciplines their courage for the rigors of the strife.

The robust souls whom God hath met reckon not what craven fleeth;
They cannot be withholden, they rise up from their places;
They enter the palæstra with strong and eager faces;
They love the spur of contest in life's Olympic races,
And prize the joy of running above the victor's wreath.

The sturdy souls whom God hath met require no tyrants' whips
To scourge them into action, nor goad of gall-ing censure;
They sign with Death himself a valorous indenture;
They journey forth with eagerness to meet the Great Adventure,
And canter down the Valley with laughter on their lips.

LAMECH

I WAS a Galilean,
Son of Jephthah and Ruth.
Journeying from Cana to Ascalon
One summer day, night coming on
I stopped at eventide for breath
At a little inn at Nazareth —
A filthy town, forsooth.

I was a Jewish peasant,
And lowly enough, in truth,
But I left the village early next morn
With a heart like a king's in a palace born;
Just how it came, I cannot tell —
Only I know by the village well
At sunrise I met a Youth.

I was a Hebrew peasant,
Son of Jephthah and Ruth.
I had great sorrows afterward,
And life's misfortunes pressed me hard,
But filled with light the long years were,
And all the world seemed kindlier
Because I saw that Youth.

BERENICE

I WAS a noble maiden
Of Neccho's lineage,
A royal princess laden
With Cæsar's vassalage.

I lived beside the River,
I worshipped the Great Nile;
To bow to her, the Giver,
Men came for many a mile.

I scorned the Hebrew people;
Our ancient chroniclings
Scoffed at their servile bondage
Under the Shepherd Kings.

There came one winter evening
From distant Bethlehem
Two peasants, Joseph and Mary,
Bringing a child with them.

They came from far Judea
To live beside the Nile,—
Joseph, the aged, and Mary,
And Jesus, their little child.

They camped beside my palm-grove
That brooding, starry night;
I saw from out my casement
The orchard laved in light.

I went out to the woman
After a long, strange while,
And said: "Have you come, too,
To worship the Great Nile?"

Her face was pure as Isis'—
White, luminous and lit —
And in her eyes was yearning
And rapture infinite.

I said: "Osiris bids you
Go pray before the Nile"—
But ere my words were finished
I looked upon the Child.

An awe fell on my spirit
From out the firmament,
And I fell down in worship,
For God seemed immanent.

Puny seemed the River
And the starry, arching skies,
Puny the fame of Egypt
And all her dynasties;

Petty the roofs of Memphis,
And the tombs of Rameses,
Petty the coil and hissing
Of the far-off serpent-seas;

Paltry seemed my title,
Paltry seemed the Nile;
And all the world seemed paltry
When I beheld the Child . . .

I worshipped the Great River,
The goddess, calm and mild;
But that was ere I ever
Had knelt before the Child.

CAIUS

I WAS a young patrician,
A Julian of Rome;
I left my post in Lower Gaul
To heed divine Augustus' call,
And came to the Jewish capital
To make my irksome home.

The high Passover season
Was on, and pilgrim throngs
Were pressing through the city's gates
With faces flushed and passionate,
A host, innumerably great,
Chanting King David's songs.

To stamp out hate and treason,
To throttle or destroy,
To curb this strange and turbid race
I had been stationed in the place,
And so I scanned each Hebrew face
I met — when lo! a Boy!

He came down with his parents
From wretched Galilee;
It was not idle grace or charm,
It was not in his mien or form,
But somehow midst the world's wild storm
Godlike alone seemed he.

A boy scarce thirteen summers,
But in his earnest eyes
There glowed such perfect royalty
And luster of divinity,
That God and prince alone seemed he
Of all the earth and skies.

To stifle out sedition
And peril was my employ ;
But I would sooner meet Jove's frown,
Or smite Augustus' paltry crown,
Or trample Mars' own temple down
Than lay hands on that Boy.

It may have been a fancy —
A mind's bold wandering —
But the Cæsars seemed impotent clay —
Their empire blew like dust away —
And all the world I knew some day
Would kneel before this King.

FERNANDINA

WE come from the hoarse and jolly main,
Where the wild winds flap through the salty sails,
And the decks are smote by the gusty gales,
And the great ships croak in honest pain.

Oh! life is brave on the gallant sea,
And hearts are stout where the wide waves be:
Come, lads, let's back to the doughty sea!

Two years we've sailed the rugged deep,
And felt its fist and dodged its kick,
And stung beneath its dogged lick,
And gripped the blows the harsh waves heap.

Oh! life is stern on the rugged sea,
And hands grow hard where the rough waves be:
Come, lads, let's back to the grisly sea!

Ofttimes at night in the heavy mist
We've turned, lads, dumbly each to each,
With thoughts too hot for touch of speech,
When the solemn sea and the stars kept tryst.

Oh! life is full on the sober sea,
And lips grow dumb where the waste waves be:
Come, lads, let's back to the vast, dark sea!

Tonight we sail from the port again:
The captain calls and the aft-bells ring;
Up, merry lads, once more and sing
The loud huzzas of the heaving main.

Oh! life is good on the bounding sea,
And hearts are glad where the wide waves be:
Come, lads, let's back to the sailor's sea!

THE HIGHER PERSPECTIVE

JEHOVAH, Lord, Creator,
The Infinitely Great,
Upon the skies imperial stands,
And views the far-extending lands
Which comprehend His State.

He sees white constellations
Like vitreous bulbs out-blown,
And crimson galaxies emerge
From starry vortices that surge,
Casting up spheres of stone.

He sees nebulous systems
Like crocus buds half-blown;
And nests abandoned 'mid the stars,
Wherefrom the fledgling meteors
In pride of wing have flown.

He sees the asteroids
Blown inland from the shore
Like dunes of sand, white and wind-swept,
Which astral foothills intercept
Against the ocean's roar.

He sees the solar planets
In mobile-formed array;
And fluttering suns, pinions blood-wet,
Escaping from the fowler's net
That spans the Milky Way.

The planetary organs
And lunar chimes he hears ;
And harpist stars touching their strings,
Kindling the mighty pæanings
That leap from sphere to sphere.

Above His royal skies,
Lord of Infinity,
Majestical His watch He keeps
And views alone His Kingdom's sweep
In its full majesty.

HALLEY'S

HAIL, kindly Earth! Though many years
Have sped by since I looked on thee,
Against the plains thy form appears,
And all thy rugged panoply.
As some strange man who grimly flees
The pleasant land he values most,
Yet hies anon across the seas
And views afar its distant coast,
I course along my mighty trail,
Bright-armored Courier of Space,
Yet seeking thee anon, I hail
The lusty welcome of thy face.
Far have I fled: by lurid suns;
By whirring satellites that flash;
Through deep, unfathomed night that shuns
The lightning-fury of my lash;
By planets stark; by hurtling stars;
By plashing seas of crimson light
That spray on rock-strewn, starlit bars:
Ah! I have known a Courier's flight!
And through it all I seem to hear
A universal cry arise;
I hear it through the endless year,
I hear it through the boundless skies:
Hark, Earth, the message that I bring,
Bright Courier of the Outstretched Plains,
Hark, hark the cry the heavens ring:
Behold! The Lord Almighty reigns!

CROWN JEWELS

ONE day some angels who loved me sent
Two stars from their diadem;
But their crowns were dimmed, and so I lent
Their jewels back to them.

They had not guessed, I think, till then
(As the stars lit up their hair)
That it was the laughter of children
That made their crowns so fair.

SUNSHINE AND CANKER

A QUEEN lived in a palace
In luxury and state;
Among the lordly valleys
Her home glowed like a chalice,
But a hidden, sickly malice
Burned up the bloom of it.

A maid lived in a hovel,
And no one thought her great;
A rude roof was her cover,
But the friendship of her lover
Filled the simple thatch above her
With blossoms infinite.

OZONA

LOWLY, lowly,
Under the lea,
Roll ye, roll ye,
Mexican Sea.

Slowly, slowly,
Idle and free,
Blow ye, blow ye,
Breath of the sea.

Swiftly, swiftly,
Rouse from your sleep,
Lift ye, lift ye,
Winds of the deep.

Bravely, bravely,
Storms of the night,
Wave ye, wave ye,
Banners of white.

Lithely, lithely,
Graceful and blue,
Writhe ye, writhe ye,
Serpents of dew.

Gaily, gaily,
Ship of the sea,
Sail ye, sail ye,
Homeward to me.

Blindly, blindly,
Why will ye roam?
Bind ye, bind ye
The wings of the foam.

Shrilly, shrilly
Hisses the gale;
Will ye, will ye
Trust to your sail?

Dumbly, dumbly
Why will ye rove?
Come ye, come ye,
Back with my love.

BODIES OF MEN

O BODIES of men that are buffeted
In the lists of pain, lift up your heads,
Look beyond the throe and be comforted.

You are born through ultimate anguishes ;
Your life is a maelstrom of irk and disease ;
The locks of death spring to pain-filed keys.

You are shredded by engines of peace, annealed
To withstand your pitiful arm, and steeled
'Gainst your weapons and gossamer scarfskin
shield.

You are shattered by intricate engines of war
That rend and torture and grind and mar
With genius more deadly than Juggernaut's car.

You are pillaged by legions of armed disease,
Bacterial armies that charge and seize
Your cells and entrench in your arteries :

Intangible armies which ravage your veins,
Build secret arsenals within your brains,
And waste with fever your hearts' domains :

Armies which whelm like a crater's crust,
Grind by stealthy attrition to dust,
Incite you to throbbing, reactive lust.

O bodies of men in the crucible
Of agonies harsh and multiple,
Envisage your bodies imperishable !

You shall reach a Nirvana of soil and dew ;
River and flower your flesh shall imbue ;
A nerveless poignance shall penetrate you.

You shall be vital, but free from pain ;
You shall be sensate, yet wholly sane ;
Earth's anæsthesia shall still your brain.

You shall lie asleep through the hyemal gloom,
Awake each Spring from April's womb,
Be born into violets and crocus-bloom.

You shall interfuse Nature's tortuous form ;
You shall march in the step of the strident storm ;
You shall smite with the lightning's supple arm.

On errands quixotic your wraiths shall rise
And climb the crag-clouded range that lies
Along the vaporous plain of the skies.

You shall ride on the wings of the slender tern ;
Configure the intricate-patterned fern ;
The wind-chased rainbow shall be your urn.

O bodies of men that are wracked and slain,
In the slow alembic of struggle and pain
God distills your grief into infinite gain.

The stalk wrests its grace from the lacerate earth ;
The putrid seed gives the blade its birth ;
Through decay you shall seize indestructible
worth.

Bodies immortal shall dispossess
These coarser ones, and sturdiness
Shall displace the languor, the wrack, the stress.

Their substance no seer can foretell, whether ion
Or ether or fire-plasm blown from Orion
Or star-clay mined from some solar Albion ;

But their form shall be comely, fair and straight,
Fused with vigor which tasking nor time can
abate,
From pain and depression emancipate.

In earth's vital pottery their fashion you shape ;
You are moulding them hourly, sole to nape ;
The cast which you model they cannot escape ;

Every seam of your visage marks their face with
lines ;
Passion disfigures them, restraint refines ;
With the form of your bodies their contour
aligns.

O bodies of men, from earth's mire and mist
Transmuted arise ; God, the Alchemist,
Imparts you the form of the transfigured Christ.

THE VIRGIN MISTS

THE sun spreads a carpet of gold o'er the marginal hills,

Tissued of grasses and leaves ;
From the crimson and russet of clays and the
yellow of rills
A polychrome pattern he weaves.

He lays it across the knolls and the terminal
crests,

And deep in the valley below
He fringes it broadly from east to ultimate west
With ermines of daisy and snow.

Out from the deep ravines the white mists come,
A dim, processional host ;
Their hearts beat swift, but their lips are dumb
In the silence of prayer engrossed.

Silent they come from the columnar, gray defiles
O'er the naked pavements of clod ;
Slowly they march down the golden-carpeted
aisles,
The virginal mists of God.

And never a cloud in careless irreverence runs
Or heightens her light footfalls ;
Softly the white mists step, like sandaled nuns
Threading sequestered halls.

They kneel on the golden carpet the great sun
spreads ;

They bow them low in prayer ;
The swords of the seraphs flash about their heads,
And the flames of the sky burn there.

By the swords of the seraphim their hearts are
riven

And their souls are etched with fire ;
But they feel no hurt, for the fieriest blades of
heaven
Discover no base desire.

Up from the crested hills and the valleys deep,
Transfigured they arise ;
Like a legion of angels circling a star they sweep
Into the thronging skies.

THE APPALACHIANS

BOLDLY the Giants toiled,
Shoulder to shoulder,
Piling the ramparts high,
Boulder on boulder,

Heaping with mighty arms,
Limbs Herculean,
Granite on monolith,
Æon by æon.

Bold were the works they raised,
Massive and splendid;
Strong were the lands they held,
Mountain-defended;

Forest-encompassèd,
Sheer past disguising,
Jutting their awful lines
'Gainst the horizon,

Granite and adamant,
Crest to foundation,
Stern and impregnable,
Meet for a nation.

Up from the level-laid,
Turbulent regions
Came the wild hurricanes,
Legion on legion.

Up from the southern seas
Hurricane horsemen ;
Down from the glacial camps
Blizzard-shod norsemen ;

Infantry, lightly-armed,
Cavalry mounted,
Million on million came,
Armies uncounted ;

Horses innumerable,
Crescent-extended,
Champing their bits of fire,
Nostrils distended ;

Storm-cloud battalions
Dragging their cannons ;
Couriers with foreheads wet,
Flying black pennons ;

Thunder-voiced cavalry
Forming and charging,
Ever the battle-line
Blackening, enlarging ;

Trumpets above the din,
Bugle-blasts blowing ;
Shouts and the sound of arms,
Mingling and growing ;

Eagles above their heads
Circling and screaming,
Wrecked on the cliffs of stone
Misty and gleaming ;

Onslaughts and cannonades,
Hailstone and lightning,
Cliffs through the fiery glare
Blackening, brightening.

Column on column slain,
Vanquished and shattered,
Infantry, cavalry
Broken and scattered.

Lightning-artillery
Violently thundered,
But not a rampart lay
Gullied or sundered.

Guns from the level plains
Angrily bellowed ;
Lurid, the skies above
Reddened and yellowed.

Broken, the vanquished fled,
Torn and disheveled ;
(Not one bold rampart razed,
Captured or leveled) ;

Down from the granite cliffs
Wounded and pallid,
Yet on the plains below
Proudly they rallied.

Climbing the battlements,
Rent banners flying,
Mangled and spent they fell,
Wounded and dying.

Shredded their thin lines were,
Riven, dissevered ;
Routed and overcome,
Vanquished forever.

Sadly the remnant turned,
Ruined, defeated ;
Back to their distant lands
Swift they retreated . . .

Scornful of siege or charge,
Stormed and assaulted,
Ever the rampart stands,
Mighty, exalted ;

Scrolling its majesty
On the sky's pages,
Strong and impregnable
Through all the ages.

A LIKELY GAL

TALK o' goblin lights a-creepin'
'Long the circumscribin' skies,
Talk o' Jack-o-lanterns peepin'
Fum a niggah's shiney eyes:
You mean Dinah? Knows you nebber
Seen no gal as peart as her.
We weren't more'n kids, but ebber
Now an' den dey tol' me, sir,
 "Bettah keep yo' eyes on Dinah,
 She's a likely gal."

Wall, the summers passed, and Dinah
Growed mo' lovely to my sight;
All de gals tried to outshine her,
But dey couldn't hold a light!
Nebber seen no sight so ketchy
As de way she 'clined her head;
Ole Marse knowed dat chile was fetchy,
So he sidled up an' said,
 "Bettah keep yo' eyes on Dinah,
 She's a likely gal."

When we married she wuz twenty,
An' each yeah she growed mo' sweet,
An' our home was blessed wid plenty,
An' de pat o' chillun's feet.
Dinah, she wuz singin', prayin',
Workin' 'fo' de sun arise,
An' dem little brats a-sayin'

Fum de love looks in der eyes,
 “ Bettah keep yo’ eyes on Dinah,
 She’s a likely gal.”

But ole Dinah’s head is whitenin’,
An’ her songs come mighty slow,
An’ de western slopes is brightenin’
Wid a kind o’ heavenly glow,
An’ de angels soon is comin’
For ole Dinah as she sings,
’Case I sometimes heahs ’em hummin’
’Mid de swishin’ of dere wings,
 “ Bettah keep yo’ eyes on Dinah,
 She’s a likely gal.”

THE CYNIC'S NIGHT

THE half-moon blots the sky,
A haunting, crimson thing:
A gaping wound, a blood-shot eye,
A gash on a raven's wing.

The moon is dripping stars,
Viscid, dark, congealed,
Like clots from a soldier's opened scars
On a blood-swept battle-field.

No hand may stanch the wounds;
And so the night ebbs on,
Wasting away until it swoons
Into a bloodless dawn.

THE POET'S NIGHT

UPON the sky's broad board
A velvet cloth is laid ;
The moon is lit, the starshine poured,
The banquet is arrayed.

Citrons and figs are spread,
And mints on ebon plates ;
Clusters of grapes and bread
And galaxies of dates ;

Wafers of snow, and rice,
And milk in purple jars,
And pomegranates banked in ice,
And crystal-cruled stars.

Wearied, the pale dawn slakes
Her hunger at the feast ;
Ruddy, she runs and overtakes
The day-star in the east.

THE ATLANTIC

GRIM, unmerciful, gigantic, breathing blizzards
oceanic,
Stands the burly old Atlantic,
Sentinel between the continents;
Through his hair the white snows blowing,
through his veins the salt-blood flowing,
Round his feet the ice-floes growing,
And overhead the mighty firmament.

Through his heart the blood goes urging, in re-
sistless volume surging,
And incessantly emerging
In a ponderous diastole;
His arteries are tense and singing and their cur-
rents ever winging
Like a flock of petrels, bringing
Warmth and health to all the mighty sea.

Nor the Baltic currents, nor all the draughts of
Labrador
Can o'er-chill his tempers, for
They must meet the Equatorial Drift
As resistlessly it leaps through the giant's veinous
deeps
Like a headstrong tide that sweeps,
Ceaseless, vast, regurgitant and swift.

With his feet heaped o'er with snows, like a Soc-
rates he goes
And his homely visage glows
With a Stoical severity;
And he scorns the jewelled palace in the gleaming
northern valleys
Where the glittering Borealis
Lights the chambers of the Arctic Sea.

ALL IN ALL

THE Lord who made the violet,
And shaped the linnet's staves —
He walked upon Gennesaret
And stilled the turbid waves.

The Lord who loved the hillside bloom
And the blue sky's underglow —
They buried Him in a garden tomb
Where the lilies could not go.

The Lord who planned the universe
Or ever the white stars met —
He felt the thrust of the soldiers' curse,
He prayed on Olivet.

The Lord who made the eagle's nest
And the lemming's tents of snow —
He had no place where He might rest
Nor home where He might go.

The Lord who lit the children's eyes
And gave His joy to them —
He wept beneath Judea's skies
O'er lost Jerusalem.

The Lord who gave the people breath
And immortality —
He met the hate of Nazareth,
He died on Calvary.

THUS MUCH I LOVE YOU

THUS much I love you, dear :

If I were cast upon some sea-girt isle,
Wind-spiraled, breaker-ringed, and wild,
The flushed horizons and the sea-shells' hue
Would paint for me the rosy face of you ;
The memory of your pulsing voice, your
smile,
Would make a homeland of that alien isle ;
The plumbless heavens and the drop of dew
Would hold for me the crystal eyes of you ;
That land would seem my motherland the
while
I thought upon the fairness of your smile ;
The windy tempests and the waters blue
Would body forth the lithesome soul of you ;
The vision of your face would reconcile
My heart to bear the separating mile ;
Not lonely I, as those whose friends are few,—
My soul were populous with thoughts of you ;
The memory of your laughter would beguile
The tedium of that bare and far exile ;
Though all the winds of heaven's four quarters
blew,
My heart were peaceful in the love of you.

Thus much I love you, dear :

If I were cast into the melting-pot
Of some tumultuous town I revered not,
'Mid all that city's shouts and mingling hue
My ears should listen for the voice of you ;

Through all the city's labyrinthine plot
Your hand would lead me steadily, I wot;
And I should disembroil its mingled clue
In thinking of the simple heart of you;
Amidst the cauldron's tumult, seething-hot,
My heart were happy and happy were my
lot;
Should all the beauties that the town 'er knew
Be packed into one bright and burning view
And focused in one white and vivid spot,
Thy fairer face should never be forgot,
And all the beauty that o'er-brimmed my view
Would but composite the fair face of you.
I should find solace (though the melting-pot
Were filled with bitter tears, and fever-hot),
And confidence and strength for tasking, too,
In leaning on the earnest soul of you.

HAMILCAR BARCA

“ Go now, my son, and swear eternal hate
Against the vulgar breed that sprawls its flanks
Wolf-like across the Tiber’s foul banks :
A hate so leonine and passionate
That harsh revenge alone its lust can sate,
With oath so bold that through the Punic ranks
Shall rush a fire of vengefulness, and thanks
(Which thy mature conquests shall consummate)
For Hannibal, best of the lion’s brood.
Kneel low, my whelp, and there remember thou
The insults drunk by Carthago, thy home,
Forced by the hand of Rome, and poison-hued ;
Then rise and give thy life to seal thy vow
Of everlasting enmity to Rome.”

ARCHIPPUS

PAUL, ever bounden for his brethren's sake,
Beholding one whose soul was faint, thus spake :
" Servant of Christ, possess thy soul, content,
Nor falter thou to spend and to be spent ;
In patience toil ; the seed thy fingers plant
Another waterest, but Christ will grant
The increase ; and thou who sowest for thy King
Into His granary the sheaves shalt bring.

" And though thy sickle may not feel the thrill
Of mighty harvests bending 'neath its blade,
Thou presently shalt glean, and in God's will
Thy hands shall bring the ripe grain in." He
said ;
Then gladness, like a sunrise, fell athwart
The pioneer's dim-starred and shadowed heart.

APRIL BLOOM

APRIL, make room
For the white-winged orange-bloom.
As the larvæ crowd through the postern gates
Of their crumbling chrysalis walls,
Yet pause on the drawbridge, breath abate,
Ere their ruined palace falls:
So the white-winged bloom, with aim fore-planned,
Have shattered their chrysalis,
Still lightly poised on the threshold stand
Ere they lilt to the sphered abyss.
They have emptied the cellars and palace vaults
Of their sunny-flavored casques;
Firkins of nard and yellow flasks
They have stored in their chests away;
Flagons of odor and drink they hold,
Wealth of damask chary of faults,
Treasures of rondure and pigment and oil,
Riches of sugar and acid and fume;
Nuggets and ore of liquid gold
Mined from the sun and soil;
And this is their errand and task,
To recompense all who ask;
They will guerdon mankind with this largess some
day,
For prodigal spenders are they.
April, make room
For the spendthrift orange-bloom.

April, make room
For the white-starred orange-bloom.
As the novæ leap o'er the parapet
Of the castellated night,
Ablaze with scimitars, jewel-set,
And gold-visored satellites:
So the arbor-stars, in ensigned sheen,
Vault their umbrageous battlements,
Break through their sky of spangled green,
And capture their firmaments;
They are mailed in armor, satin-white,
Crowned with saffron coronets;
They sheathe the blunt swords of chrysolite.
(Swift, crickets, swift with thy castanets!)
Hail, lords of the tropic flowerets!
April, make room
For the gold-fiefed orange-bloom.

TAMPA BAY

THE Mexican Gulf is a lioness,
Brutal and agile and fair,
And she holds her whelps beside her
In the covert of her lair ;
She holds her whelps beside her,
And jealous is her care.

Her lair is wide and windy
And primeval and free ;
It lies three-square and strong between
The continent and the sea ;
It underhangs a continent,
But it opens into the sea.

The Mexican Gulf is a lioness,
Crafty and cunning for prey ;
She feeds her whelps with the limbs of men
And living flesh, they say ;
And they drink with her milk the blood of beasts
From the flesh that her strong teeth fray.

She will not let them straggle out ;
She keeps them at her side ;
She combs their soft manes with her paws ;
She fondles them with pride ;
She buffets them with sheathen paws,
And licks them with her tide.

*Oh! she loves the whelps of Mobile
And Galveston, they say;
But more than all she loveth
Her wild-born Tampa Bay.*

Her eyes are white and stormy-blue;
Her breast throbs like a gale;
And like the whip of a hurricane
Is the slap of her spotted tail;
Her love is the love of the mother brute,
But her wrath is the wrath of the male.

*Oh! she loves the whelps of Mobile
And Vera Cruz, they say;
But best of all she loveth
Her wild-born Tampa Bay.*

The Tampa Bay is a lion,
Masculine, young and bold;
His body is young and tender,
But his heart is wild and old.

His breast is white and shaggy,
And tousled is his mane,
And the heart that pounds beneath it
Her strength cannot restrain;
His anger and his turbulence
Her strength cannot restrain.

For the Tampa Bay is a wilding,
Beauteous and unrestrained;
The last-born of the lion's brood,
Wild-hearted and untamed.

He romps along his cavern
With a primal playfulness ;
His play is wild and turbid ;
(His soul can bide no less) ;
And white Pinellas shivers
Beneath his strong caress.

The Tampa Bay is a lion,
Bold and strong and fair ;
His mother combs his matted mane
And licks his matted hair,
And she holds him like a captive
Within her mighty lair.

He is her baby lion,
And jealous is her guard ;
By fear and love and anger
She holds her wilding ward,
Her wild-born and her last-born,
The last she bore her lord,
Who treads the trackless planet
With kingly tramp and hard.

His cave is strong and narrow
And locked with coral-bar ;
His cave is soft and narrow,
And small its limits are
Between the tropic mainland
And the white peninsula ;
His cave is strong and narrow,
He cannot wander far.

He lusts to join the lions
Who trail the level plain
And prowl the midnight jungles
Which blot the desert-main;
He lusts to leave the narrow lair
Where he has always lain.

He crouches in his cavern
And futilely he springs;
Along the quivering mainland
His grisly growl rings;
Imprisoned Egmont trembles
And beats her fettered wings.

His roar is hoarse and grisly;
He paws his narrow cage;
He hurls his dripping body
Against his cavern's edge;
His breast is wild with fury
And impotent with rage.

With cold, tempestuous anger
His glittering eyes dilate;
His heaving breast is driven
With lustings passionate;
And all the land is shaken
Beneath his frenzied hate.

*The Mexican Gulf is a lioness,
Brutal and wild, they say;
But she loves with a jealous loving
Her wild-born Tampa Bay.*

SCATTERED STAMENS

THE shining warp of Cassiopeia's light
Borrows the gleaming threads of Alcyone
And checks with gold the dark weft of the night
Along the selvage of the horizon.

The moon is like an empty silver vase
Against that far sky's checquered plaid;
Its roses have been blown from place to place —
A broken stamen here, and there a white pleiad.

TO A CHILD

God made you of clay,
But 'twas finer by far
Than the kind that we dwell upon ;
From the coasts where the angel-children play
By the booming surf of the farthest star,
He drew the sands of a misty sun,
 Where the cherubim sit on the astral sands
 And sieve the golden grains through their
 hands.

God made your laughing eyes
Of sunny, crystal blue ;
But not from the rills of the aqueduct hills
Nor the amber cup of the rain-brimmed skies
The opaline lights of your eyes he drew ;
Where the vaporous air of the stars distills
 He dipped the blue of the eyes of you
 From amethyst basins of starry dew.

God made your gentle smiles
From the petals of orchid-blooms
Fairer than ever blossomed on earth
Or garlanded temple or garden-aisles ;
From the bowers of bloom that graced his room
He garnered the flowers of liquidest mirth
 And mellowest color and airiest grace
 To bloom in the vase of your fair-moulded face.

God made your little soul
Of the heart of two human folk
Whose souls were fused as one :
By one, the grace of a poppy's boll,
And by one, the rugged fibre of oak
Tempered in unsheathed tempest and sun ;
 And he blew through the skies of your simple
 mind
The sweetest breath from his garden's wind.

THE ALCHEMISTS

THE river's bed is habited
By south-wind alchemists:
One bank is dimmed with gentian-fogs
And one with pansy-mists.

The hills that brood above my head
Are robed in wraiths of blue:
One hill is wet with violets
And one with lilac-dew.

From cloud-banks, white and lava-red,
The buoyant north-wind blows
Showers of glancing asphodel
And melting flakes of rose.

THE ORCHESTRA

THE west winds do not need
A golden-mounted harp:
They can play upon a weed
Or a poppy's pericarp.

The south winds do not ask
For a rosewood violin:
They can bow an acorn's casque
Or a green-stringed tamarind.

The west winds do not seek
A silver-crested flute:
They can blow a marsh-hen's beak
Or an apple-tree's gnarled root.

The north winds do not pray
For an ivory-spiraled fife:
They can pipe on a tube of clay
Or a bladed rock's bare knife.

FLAME AND FOAM

My garden is afire with flowers flaming,
Kindled by fagots of sun-ignited clay,
Too delicate for fuel and too riotous for taming,
Scarlet bonfires ruddier than the day.

My river is abloom with flowers foaming,
Rooted in fertile waves of wind-plowed dew,
Too fleeting for transplanting and too light for
harsher loaming,
Pearly petals clothed in limpid leaves of blue.

THE PLOUGHMAN

THERE WAS an ancient ploughman
Who tenanted the skies;
His farm was gravel-soiled and lean,
But from his cottage could be seen
(For scarce a hedgerow lay between)
The fields of the sunrise.

*His hair was white as snow-clouds;
His cheeks were golden-glossed;
His eyes were bright as emeralds;
And his beard was like gray frost.*

He was a patriarch,
And marvellously wise;
He was an aged and reverend cottager;
Tenants, like him, his neighbors were,
(But he, alone, is gardener
And tills the red sunrise).

*His plough was pale as amber,
And sapphire was its blade;
Its handles were like lavender,
And a furrow deep it made.*

Innumerable years
Over his house had flown;
But he held his plot by tenantry,
And æon by æon he longed to be
A freedman with his acres free
And land to call his own.

*His farm was dry and barren;
Its soil was hard and lean;
His soul outgrew his acres few
And craved a wide demesne.*

He came before his lord
And knelt low at his feet:
“O Master of these fertile skies,
Beyond my cottage gate there lies
The fallow land of the sunrise,
Broad, arable, and sweet.”

*(His farm was bare and narrow,
A sterile, cloud-hedged plot;
And that was why he craved the sky
And the sunrise fields, I wot.)*

Then with a deeper bow
And luster in his eyes,
He said: “O Master, I will vow
To till it well.” “It is enow;
Arise each morn ere day and plough
The fields of the sunrise.”

*Acres of gray and yellow,
Acres of dun and white,
Furrows of foam and misty loam
And soil of chrysolite.*

He ploughed the fallow sunrise,
He ploughed the sallow sunrise
Where the corn and roses grow ;
For he had vowed — and well he ploughed —
And rich his gardens grew ;
And night by night he watered them
With fountains of sweet dew,—
Forests of gray and meadows blue,
And grain-fields white as snow.

His lord who saw his tasking
And patience infinite,
He summoned him by cherubim,
And north to south, from rim to rim,
He gave the sunrise fields to him,
And he is lord of it.

*Acres of blue and sapphire,
Fertile and flower-lit,
Moorlands of mist and amethyst,—
And he is lord of it.*

He planted it in forests
And corn and roses red
And iris-bulbs and violets
And silver-wheat, and vineyards wet
With dew, and olive-trees firm-set,
And golden pansy-beds :

*Vineyards of grapes, and orchards,
And forests of sweet fir,
And cedar-trees and lilac-buds
And cassia-shrubs like myrrh.*

The sun o'er-flows his furrows
And floods his bending grain ;
But when the floods recede away,
He casts aside his cloak of gray,
And comes alone, ere break of day,
To plough his fields again.

*Two milk-white oxen,
And two of tawny hide,
Dragging a plough of copper-red
Across the moorlands wide.
(To break his pledge were sacrilege,
And forfeiture beside.)*

REMORSE

A TREMOR of wonder —
A hot, hectic dawn —
A sense of confusion —
Then blackness came on.
A shudder of sunshine —
Red rain on the slope —
All dreams turned to smoking
And lampblack of hope.
A sense of confusion —
A wild rush of light —
A flash through the tempest —
Then out in the night.
A fear like a nightmare —
A soul seared with pain —
A mark on my forehead —
A curse on my brain.
A mind mad with thinking —
A soul lost through sin —
Bald ruin around me —
And chaos within.
A sensing of horror —
A body in strife —
A clutch for tomorrow —
A dying through life.

THE PALIMPSEST

DAWN, the young bard, with soul and hand Ho-
meric,

Inscribes his epics brave upon the parchment sky;
With poet's craft and youth's ingenuousness in-
dites

The Iliad of the warring rays, the daystar's
Odyssey.

Noon, the white monk, lays his gray cowl by,
Erases the heroic lines and writes

His monographs and theses esoteric —

The sun's Apologetics, Nature's Theodicy.

At dusk beneath the glowing candelabra of the
West

We read the dual legend of the fading palimpsest.

WAKING WATERS

THE wistful wind bends o'er the waking waters
And kisses wide their eyelids, one by one;
She loves them, for they are her sons and daughters,
The children which she bore her lord, the Sun.

She stirs their lips to smiles with light caresses,
She plays her fingers through their gentian hair;
By myriad innuendos she expresses
Her tenderness and artless mother-care.

The little waves clap their white hands on waking,
And tell the dreams that sailed across their sleep:
Of fishermen their silver nets forsaking
And sailors' boats at anchor on the deep.

Their father drives by mailed in shining splendor;
To welcome him their mother's proud feet run;
She lifts her children to the casement window
To kiss the lips of their brave lord, the Sun.

CAMPERS

“ JOURNEYING from sky to sky,

We are campers — you and I —

In this little strip of woods which men call Earth ;

We shall pitch our frail tents

Under myriad firmaments ;

We shall measure many a starry system's girth.

“ When the morning grays the sky

We shall cast our baggage by,

Join our comrade-adventurers on their tramp ;

Unrestrained and light of load

We shall take the level road

Till we come where souls strike their eternal
camp.”

THE UNDERTOW OF JUNE

THE sultry tide sweeps up the shore:
Reined by the cold, magnetic moon,
It whinnies with a low, narcotic cry before
It falls prostrate on Ormond's dune,
Steeped in a hot, mid-tropic swoon.

The Spring sweeps up the shore of May:
Numbed by the chill of April's yesternoon,
It sobs along the beach with plaintive neigh
Before it rushes out to meet the summer's hot
monsoon,
Lashed by the torrid undertow of June.

KINGS AND SAVAGES

PACIFIC

I AM the mighty monarch
That rules the subject world:
From Frisco Bay
To old Cathay
My ensigns are unfurled.

INDIAN

I am a fugitive
From the commonwealth of seas:
Behind the Strait
I crouch and wait
My vengeful enemies.

ARCTIC

I am a heartless miser;
I glory in my vice:
In caverns cold
I hoard my gold
And vaults of glacial ice.

CARIBBEAN

I am a lawless pirate
Whose flag knows no eclipse:
The mad-cap Gasparilla
That scours the flying billow
And loots the snarling ships.

ATLANTIC

I am an admiral;
I love the shock and fray:
My cannons sweep
The cringing deep
From Ormond to Calais.

MEDITERRANEAN

I am a cannibal;
I glut on human prey:
From Tyre to Spain
I rove the main
To find whom I may slay.

ANTARCTIC

I am a savage hermit:
Alone from age to age
I sit and brood
In musings rude
Upon the sky's dark page.

SWEET SAVOYARD

LIKE a white wildflower's heart,
Fraught with artless nature's art,
Light of latch and lightly barred
Is your heart, sweet Savoyard.

Luminous and keenly bright
Like a fire-moth in the night,
Warm, nor scintillant nor hard,
Are your eyes, sweet Savoyard.

Violet and gold they glow
Like a star-rise o'er the snow;
Like a snow-drift, planet-starred,
Your face haunts me, Savoyard.

Wildwood-idle, wildflower-free
You have said you'll ever be;
But, my sweet, be on your guard,
Lest I pluck you, Savoyard.

THE FARMER

THE FARM

Two knolls that came together
In a valley, dun and bare,
Like the halves of an open volume
Which the Maker had left there;
Down the line where the volume parted,
A book-mark, silver-glossed,
To show the leaves the Maker
Wished written and embossed:
The book-mark was bound to its binding
As a river is bound to its brook,
And plain as an unwrit parchment
Were the sheets of the open book,
Save that afoot of the pages
These words were scribed in stones:
“God’s wages are liberal wages,
And his word o’er-standeth all ages:
Men gather as they have sown.”

THE SCRIBE

The farmer seized his harrow
And plow and hoe and spade:
(They seemed but clumsy graving-tools,
But facile pens they made,
As they scrolled the leaves of the volume
And the soil of the parchment laid.)
He wrote with a fine abandon
The lines which came to him;

He flourished the plow and the harrow
With a bared and lusty limb,
And the lines leaped out resplendent
From the sheets that had lain vacant,
Barren of word, and dim.
Among the thick-tomed mountains
The open volume stood,
(From title-stones to margin
'Twas scarce a hundred-rood);
And all who read its legend
Proclaimed the writing good.

THE AUTHOR

But it was not his writing —
Though his strong hands held the pen —
It came by inspiration
From the God who speaks through men.
The pages glowed with a meaning
They had not known ere then,
When the Master-Author bended
And touched the mystic mire;
They glowed like a choral-volume
Oped for a seraph-choir;
The language bloomed in colors,
And the message blazed like fire.

The lines blazed out in barley
And rye and corn and wheat,
Omens of bloom and tassel,
Phrases homely and sweet;
Ballad and chant and lyric,

Sermon and ode and hymn,
Pæan and vesper-litanies —
And all of them sung to Him;
Bulbous phrases and idioms,
Pregnant with life and strong,
Clover-bells and clambering vines
That rhymed like genial song;
Epigrams, bolled and kerneled,
Proverbs in stalk and seed,
Marginal annotations
And footnotes of grass and weed;
Clauses of oat and orchard,
Phrases of rye and corn
That read like living ballads
Under the magic morn;
Blossoms and tinted mosses
Dripping with dewy damps
That read like breviaries
Under the sunset lamps.

Then they who read the pages
And knew their beauty and worth,
They praised the Master-Author
Who had given the farmer birth
And placed in his hands the harrow
To write on the leaves of the earth.

THE FERRY-BELLS

THE ferry slowly fades into the dark ;
The waters pilot back the passengers' farewells ;
Against the wharves where human souls embark
Blow back the echoes of the ferry-bells :
The ferry-bells, the ferry-bells
That melt into the mist ;
The tolling of their tongues dispels
The river's fogs, I wist ;
The gloaming bells, the homing bells
Of Death, the Melodist.

The ferry slowly merges from the dark ;
The nearing shore-line sings with siren shells ;
Beyond the mists — where spirits disembark —
Vibrate the pæans of the ferry bells :
The ferry-bells, the ferry-bells
That disengage the mist ;
The mounted heralds which foretell
That Life will keep his tryst ;
The winging bells, the singing bells
Of Death, the Harmonist.

TOWNSIDE AND COUNTRYSIDE

THE town is good — God made it —
 Open and simple and true ;
But a townsman, I,
To dwell and to die,
 My instinct cannot evade it
 That God made the city, too.

.

They say when the country was building
 The Lord Himself came down —
But they were unskilled workmen
 Erected the tawdry town.

The country, they say, is sober,
 But the town is a vapid parade
Of gilded poltroons and marionettes
 In epaulets and braid.

They say that the country breathes ballads,
 That the city's breath is trade ;
That the town is clothed in tinsel
 Filthily-hemmed and frayed ;

That the pride of the city proves gossamer
 When the souls of the earth are weighed,
And the heart of the town shows but valueless clay
 When the ores of the earth are assayed.

.

But I know that the city is earnest
And real as a living coal;
It seethes like the core of a furnace
Flamed by the torch of its soul.

The heart of the city is vibrant
With ganglia of spirit and steel;
It burns with a glowing intensesness
That the country cannot feel.

I have found joy and achievement
In the myriad-minded town:
Joy of a million comrades,
And action unwarped by renown.

The city's head is bowed before God
And wears a cathedral-crown;
I doubt not to build its fair coronet
The Lord sent His jewelsmith down.

.

The country is simple and candid —
The country the Lord God made;
And the town stands stately and splendid,
Built on the stones He laid.

SISTERS THREE

APRIL has two sisters,
 Little May and June:
One thrums on drawling zephyrs,
 One pipes a tempest-tune.

April has two sisters,
 Gentle May and June:
One's coat is flecked with petals,
 And one's is flower-strewn.

April has two sisters,
 May and merry June:
One wears satin slippers,
 And one wears silver shoon.

April has two sisters,
 Tender May and June:
One loves the cries of children,
 And one the witches' croon.

April has two sisters,
 Gentle May and June:
One laughs beneath the sunlight,
 One smiles beneath the moon.

April has two sisters,
 May and jocund June:
One braves the bantering breakers,
 One sits beside the dune.

April has two sisters,
Placid May and June:
One courts the open ocean,
One seeks the still lagoon.

April has two sisters,
Friendly May and June:
One hides her pain in pallor,
One sinks in vivid swoon.

April has two sisters,
May and jolly June:
One loves the river's lyric,
And one the ocean's boom.

April has two sisters,
Quiet May and June:
One quests the hush of twilight,
And one the clash of noon.

April has two sisters,
May and ardent June:
One loves the subtle violet,
And one the wild-rose bloom.

April has two sisters,
Little May and June:
They blend in their embraces
Like roses in festoon.

ALL MILLENNIUMS

CHILD of all races, heir of all men,
The ages have met in his two years and ten.

Flower of all nations, fruit of all spheres,
Lightly he carries his fardel of years.

On many a nimble pilgrimage
He seeks the fray of the wide world's edge.

With coil and cell and magic wire
He threads his world with occult fire.

More devious are his wildwood ways
Than Egypt's labyrinthic maze.

Voyaging in his canoe,
He ranks Magellan's hardy crew.

Treasures his Argonauts explore
Richer than shone on Colchis' shore.

Mounting a hill beneath the sun,
He tastes the bread of Ericsson.

In pathless marsh, parting the weeds,
Balboa's conquests he exceeds.

His Norfolk's deep recesses hold
Treasures that pale Aladdin's gold.

Minnows among the argent bars
Enchant him more than gold-finned stars.

Tramping the forests with his gun,
He fellows with Napoleon.

For him the songs of warbling waves
Rival the siren's fluid staves;

Hydra's hoarse cries cannot surpass
The hiss of rattlers in the grass;

A wild deer's leap from ambushment
Excels Pegasus' winged ascent.

Within each brambled glen and wood
He hears the fife of Robin Hood.

Against the sun's red core he sees
The groves of the Hesperides.

Barefoot daisies are to him
Fair as a choir of cherubim.

The tramp of rain upon the roofs
Outpaces Elis' myriad hoofs.

By crying fox and lyring bird
His heart like Shelley's heart is stirred.

Creature of spirit, soil and fire,
God and all planets his breath inspire.

Vital as life, informed is he
With God's divine vitality.

Like soil his flesh is rooted fast
Into the geologic past.

Like free camp-fire his heart is swirled
Into the circumambient world.

Cycles of agile mirth arise
And gambol lithely in his eyes.

Currents of countless centuries
Are channeled through his arteries.

His elemental spirit sums
The soul of all millenniums.

GRIEF

My soul is knit to her whom men name Grief
In binding ties of tender comradeship;
Her wounds are pledges of divine relief
And heaven's solaces tenant her lip.
I welcome her who sought me first unasked;
Her raucous voice has taught my heart to sing;
My lagging courage by her speech is tasked;
And I am healed beneath her chastening.
The tears she wrings her sympathy o'erwells;
She blinds my reason, makes my soul to see;
Her presence, which appeared a ban from hell,
Has proved heaven's fairest bridal gift to me.
For God sends down his own handmaiden Grief
To woo our hearts to His divine belief.

PAIN

I AM betrothed to her whom men call Pain ;
Our souls are pledged in vows of suffering ;
Her love which seemed a curse has been my gain ;
She crippled me but gave my soul a wing.
I met her in the morning of my youth ;
I shunned her hand as one of leprous touch ;
Her vows of love seemed mockeries of truth
And her embrace an evil stranger's clutch.
But as my faltering feet walked by her side
The doors of all the skies our portals were ;
She drew me into spaces clean and wide
And like a bride I came to reverence her ;
 To guide my soul an angel's hand was given ;
 I lost earth's poignances, but gained a heaven.

A LETTER OF CHRIST

CHRIST the Lord from His lofty place
Summoned His seraphim;
They divined as they searched their Master's face
That grave thoughts troubled Him.

“The men of earth are forgetting me;
My messages go unread;
I will write again that my people may see
That I care for them,” He said.

Then He who etches His epics in stones,
Who engraves the coastwise cliffs,
Who symbols His feelings in zodiac zones
And chemical hieroglyphs;

He who writes in sidereal lines
And pencils the solstices,
Discloses His mind in starry designs
And solar geologies;

He who indites the intricate rose
And the burgeoning hyacinth,
Inscribes His thoughts in legible snows
And the feldspar's labyrinth:

Searching among earth's denizens,
He chose Him a little child,
And wrote thereon His letter to men,
Simply and nobly styled.

Body and brain and heart He seized —
Plastic and clean was the scroll —
And the Lord Christ wrote as His Spirit pleased
On this parchment of cell and soul.

Not in some inaccessible sphere
Did He write — in language past reach —
But in the obvious, tangible here,
In humanity's simple speech.

No controvert year of some ancient age
Was *graved* on this living flesh ;
It was stamped anew on every page
And dated each day afresh.

Christ wrote of His love for all human folk
Of every name and breed ;
Of its broad encompassment He spoke
And its tact for every need ;

Of His love more wide than the ether waves
Through the deep-basined universe blown
Whose subtle, impalpable current laves
The shores of each created sun.

He wrote of His joy that outran the length
Of the far-extending skies :
Joy of creating — joy of strength —
Joy of unconstrained sacrifice.

He wrote of His gladness in all created things:
Luminous, belted spheres,
Flashing of surf and music of wings
And the tempest's charioteers.

He wrote of the gardens of peace that bloom
Through the soil of suffering,
Of the rugged ranges of strength that loom
O'er the plains of endeavoring.

He wrote of His plans for the human race
(The words burned like fire on the scroll):
The indelible image of God on the face,
The Lord Christ throned in the soul.

There were lines which failed of their full intent —
Sentences faded and blurred —
Clauses obscured by the dull parchment
Or incompletely averred.

But the thoughts were phrased in kindly act
And deeds of charity;
Their spirit fulfilled what the parchment lacked
Of finish and symmetry.

And then when the letter was all complete
And the last of the long scroll came,
He sealed its words with His signet-ring
And signed it with His name.

Speech of His heart, word of His will,
Voice of His intimate mind,
Christ honored it with His royal seal
And despatched it to all mankind.

COMRADESHIP

My comrade strikes chords in my heart
That elsewhere lie silent and mute:
Dumb instruments, moved by his art
And roused by his valiant salute,
He wakens,
The organ — the trumpet — the flute.

Pure laughter, immaculate, strong,
Brave merriment, innocent, wild,
And ripples of joy that belong
To a mischievous child
Overtaken,
Run out from my heart with a song.

He draws o'er my spirit his bow,
And impulses chivalric trip
Along my heart's white hedgerow,—
And gladness, like water that drips,
Clear, fleeting,
Between white basins of snow.

He touches my soul with his hand,
And longing and brooding catch fire,
And the glows of a kindled firebrand
Leap out from each quivering wire,
Vibrating,
Like ardors that leap from a lyre.

He presses my heart to his lips,
And fervors of action and zest
My spirit enkindle, and grip
With valorous tempers my breast,
Fast-beating,
Like pulses in battle-shocks pressed.

His fingers run over the keys
Of my soul, and stave upon stave
Of massive solemnities
Rise, like an anthem grave
Dilating
Under an infinite nave.

My comrade strikes chords in my heart
That elsewhere lie silent and mute;
Dumb instruments, by his strong art
And spur of his valiant salute,
He wakens,
The organ — the trumpet — the flute.

THE TEMPLE

COLOSSAL is the temple
Built to the God Alone,
The universe, foundationed
On immaterial stone.
Its planetary pendulums,
Marking the half-millenniums,
And gongs of august tone,
High in its massive dome,
Are calling worlds to worship
Of every star and nation
And race and earth that roams;
To kneel in adoration
Before the mighty altar
Of God's eternal home.

MY BROTHERS

I AM bending
'Neath all human loads ;
And I feel each lash that goads
The burdened back of every child of man.

I am singing
All earth's glad refrains,
And each carol that unchains
The singing soul of all humanity.

I am hungry
With the eagerness
Of the cravings that possess
The bodies of impoverished mankind.

I am sharing
Every human glee ;
Like sweet music is to me
The lyric pulse of all humanity.

I am thirsty
With the famished lips
Of a race that only sips
At the fountains of infinity.

I am laughing
With the heartiness
Of a race that feels life's stress,
But slackens it with smiles robust and free.

I am weeping
In the bitterness
Of the hot tears which express
The anguish of my baffled fellow-men.

I am pressing
Toward the distant goal
That lures on the human soul,
Beside each earnest, eager son of man.

A PSALM

For majesty of sun's eclipse;
For smiles that play on parted lips;
For silent forests' needled cones,
And lichens stained on garden-stones;
For velvet bud and glittering thorn;
For hilltops where the siroccos
Intone their oratorios,
And bare trees limned above their brink
Like Gothic arches etched on zinc:
I thank Thee, Lord.

For starry pools like garnets set
Among the mountains, sodden-wet;
For bittern's cry in weeping marsh,
And croak of raven, mellow-harsh;
For showers' footprints in the grass,
And ghostly fires in mired morass;
For snow-fields white as washen fur,
And marsh-hen's caw and robin's whir:
I thank Thee, Lord.

For quiet roof above my head,
And hearthside generous and red;
For comradeship of fellowmen,
And friendship's chastening regimen;
For strength to bear my little load
Along humanity's high-road;
For little children's confidence,
And clean adventure's sharp suspense;

For planet's orb and star's ellipse,
And touch of human fellowships;
For throb of grief and pang of pain
That drives me back to Thee again:
I thank Thee, Lord.

For fervent faith and ardent hopes
That kindle the eternal slopes,
Where mountains tower, range on range,
Endless of lure and zest and change,
Rising in fair infinitude
Beyond the narrow Valley's rood,
Whose crownless peaks our feet shall climb
Throughout illimitable time:
I thank Thee, Lord.

NIGHT

I AM a comrade of the sable night ;
Her face, which seemed a visage from the tomb
And chilled my shrinking heart with dumb affright,
Now radiantly glows within my room.
Importunate she stood outside my door,
And laggard were the hours she sought for me ;
My flesh was weary and my spirit sore
With staying back her importunity.
But she intruded, and I came to know
Her winsome friendliness and tender grace ;
Her presence burns like noonday's underglow
And shining suns irradiate her face.
Her fellowship constrained my heart to pray
And through her skies dawned life's eternal day.

DEATH

GLADLY will I meet her whose name is Death,
Nor will I wildly seek to elude her grasp
When she stoops down to kiss away my breath;
Her arms shall thrill me like a sister's clasp.
Twice has she summoned me with faltering speech;
I heard her breathing presence at my side;
I did not welcome her, and past my reach
I felt her veiled spirit softly glide.
But some day I shall cease my timid strife
And gladly answer when her clear voice speaks:
She holds the keys that guard the gate of life
And none may enter save those whom she seeks.
Guardian of heaven's fair mysteries is she,
The grave high-priestess of mortality.

THE LAKESIDE PINE

I

I AM the Lakeside Pine,
The regnant monarch of an ancient line;
 No immemorial legends trace
 The royal lineage of my race;
Before bold Ilium rose above the plain,
Or Paris drank of Helen's poisoned lips,
Or Agamemnon bore in fateful ships
The hate of Greece across the bounding main,
My brave ancestors ruled this liberal land.
Through countless years we stood august,
 alone;
We wasted not our soul in fruitless wanderings;
We deemed our glory regal to sit upon this
 throne
And wear the cone-capped diadem of kings.
Then man appeared — the naked Seminole,
 Brutal of body and soul,
 Moody and saturnine —
And by his savage strength
Brought pain and terror through our kingdom's
 length,
Till we relented to his base demand,
Yielded our sceptre to his vulgar hand;
 Upon his pagan guilt
 A dual monarchy we built,—
The brown-limbed forest and the man of brown,—
He held the sceptre, but we wore the crown.
Yet through the nameless ages he shared our
 princely side

We knew his weakness and his vulnerable pride,
Till in a fated hour his power passed away,
And we were left to wield again our undisputed
sway.

II

I am the Lakeside Pine,
And all the secrets of the lake are mine ;
My lake is like a massive earthen bowl
Of marvellous design,
Shaped in an odd primeval pottery
And fashioned in a strange and cryptic mould,
Brimming with liquid gems,
As though an abdicating dynasty
Of asteroids had cast their diadems
Into this crucible of clay and loam :
Diamonds and dewy opals,
Agate and cobalt and gold,
Whose fluid facets glow incessantly,
Seething from grayish deeps to opalescent rim,
And fusing in a secret alchemy ;
Sometimes in lustrous whiteness like a cataract
Which breaks in jeweled foam ;
And oftentimes, after winter rains,
Leaden and scalloped and lava-red,
As though cast from the crater of a shining thun-
der-head ;
And I have seen it planet-tracked
Where the footprints of the stars,
Saturn, Uranus and Mars,
Have been left along its weltering rim.

III

The lake is the Dryad of my forest-folk :
Her soul commingles with our soul
In subtlest blending of identity ;
The fountain of our feelings leaps
From out the same chill coral deeps,
From the Cimmerian springs,
The cold, subconscious springs
Whose ebb and flow the tumult of our bosom
brings,
And every emotion that through her spirit
sweeps
Vibrates along the inmost heart of me.
My Dryad is a mobile-bodied maiden,
Blue-eyed, rose-lipped and misty-haired ;
With violets of dew her idle arms are laden,
And wind-blown comets' petals within her robes
are snared.
My Dryad's is a nymph's heart, vagrant, wild,
A woman's heart that loves and scorns and
broods,
A Druid's mind of warm, inconstant moods,
And the impulsive spirit of a child.
Emotions agitate her plastic breast
Which waste in tears and laughing spray,
And eddying passions, turgidly expressed,
Dissolve in vagrant fogs and vaped play.
Limpid and unrevealing and artless is her face,
And guileless as a cobra's is her venomous em-
brace ;

Subtle and deep and passionate and myriad-souled
is she,
But all her confidences she reveals to me.

IV

I am the Lakeside Pine :
When I uplift my hand and give the choral sign,
These vast cathedral walls resound
With grave orchestral symphonies ;
The skyey dome — where cumuli like seraphim
Echo the music of each august hymn —
And these deep, arbored transepts thrill with
stately psalmodies ;
A mighty diapason anthem floats
From out the reeded bamboo-grove in organ notes ;
High in their lofts the priestly palms
Intone with reverent speech their meditative
psalms ;
The massive oak-tree blows its deep trombone
And fills the frescoed nave with solemn tone ;
The bay-magnolia's blithe cornet
Accents the piping loquat's flageolet ;
The timbrels in the eucalyptus tree
Blend with the papaw's fluted melody ;
The little violets at my feet
Strike their light cymbals in unison complete ;
Each surpliced cypress chants
In lines of mellow resonance ;
And as the mighty pæans ascend
In perfect consonance,

I vitalize the whole,
Impregnate it with soul,
While with the templed chorus my measures blend.
Within my hands I lift my ancient viol;
I bind it to my shoulders with brown thongs;
Against its mellow bowl I lightly lean;
I draw my bow across its strings of gray and
green,

And thence upspring a myriad forest songs
Which passionately throb along the sinuous
aisle:

(The song and spirit of my people dwell within
The pulsing fibre of my violin);
Innumerable woodland melodies
Distilled through cycling centuries,
Clamors of sharp surprise
And elemental cries,
Blossoming ecstasies,
Primeval memories,
The plaintive strains
Of disembodied rains,
The purr of drifting sands
Along the clean uplands,
The whirl of silver wings,
And leafy murmurings;

This is the burthen of the song which fills
The spirit of the trees;

And when its measures rise
And fill the answering skies,

I hear its measures ringing along Orion's wooded
hills

And echoing from the pine-clad Pleiades.

I am the Lakeside Pine:

My veins pulsate like deltas flushed with brine;
 I fill my flagons at the rainbow-flume,
 And crystal flasks of starlit dew I drain;
 I drink white bowls of fog-steeped orange-bloom
 And fiery cups of sunshine brewed in rain,
 Till each artery is brimming with viscous anodyne
 As wholesome as the tang of eglantine;
 Till each limb is strong and stalwart and my sin-
 ews gleam like gold,
 And my body dominates a vital race and bold.
 But new foemen now have marked me for their
 prey;
 They have come to raze to earth my broad empire;
 Men of treacherous urbanity are they;
 Their will knows no restraining, their lust is deadly
 fire;
 They will spoil our strength and carry us away.
 They will bare the scabbard, thrust their weapons
 in our side,
 Drain away our clean and virile blood,
 Gash our veins and rob them when our strength is
 at the tide
 And when our youth is at the raging flood.
 They will bear our very life-blood across the alien
 seas,
 To swell their vulgar commerce, to glut their
 treasuries,
 To waste its princely vigor in venial chemistries.
 They will strike us down, derisively, each where
 he stands,

Lift our defenceless bodies in irreverent hands,
Burn our crowns upon their red hearth-stones,
Slay our orphaned children among our dishon-
ored bones,

And banish us to unfamiliar lands.

They have sworn that I, the king, shall die ;
They have said that white men will not lie ;

Without justice, without ruth,
They will steal my kingdom and my youth.
For my throne I will not deign to plead ;
Let my crown and lineage intercede,

Let my impotence beseech,
Let my silence be my speech,
If there dwelleth mercy within the human breed.

I LIVE IN A LAND

I LIVE in a land where the rivers laugh out
As they hurdle the prairies with many a shout,
Leaping the lowlands with boisterous glee
At the call and the cry of the great, jolly sea.

I live in a land where the pine trees sigh,
And the winds step gently in passing them by,
And the lakes whisper low and the maiden brooks
weep
In the hush of that silence unbroken and deep.

I live in a land where the sun shines so bright
That the whole world is filled with loud laughter of
light,
For the land laughs outright in the face of the sun
For sheer rapture of joy and abandon of fun.

I live in a land where the shadows fall, too,
And the brave sailor-stars burn their mast-lights
for you,
As at evening you turn from the sound of the deep
And anchor your craft in some inlet of sleep.

ALICE

FILLETS of fine-spun gold, to bind her hair,
The banker-daisies lent to her ;
The spendthrift planets sent to her
Violets to plant beneath her eyelids fair.

The movements of a wild rose, lithely-swayed,
The lissom gardens gave to her ;
The courtier-wind was slave to her ;
Her lightest whims the nomad-airs obeyed.

Lips curved to speak sweet laughter and pure
notes
The lyric molluscs made for her ;
The flutist pine trees played for her ;
The birches deftly shaped her violin throat.

Phases of candor and fair courtesy
The naiad-rivers wrought for her ;
The breaker-seamen sought for her
Treasures of beauty and white chastity.

Guerdons of gentle poise and loveliness
The knightly sunlight won for her ;
The weaver-prairies spun for her
Graces of girlish charm and comeliness.

Before her princely hills made their salaam ;
The mountains mutely bowed to her ;
The lover-rivers vowed to her ;
And her chained slave and fettered liege I am.

PRAISE WAITETH FOR THEE

I THANK Thee for the mercies, Lord, which radiate
from Thee
And melt my spirit's lethargies and set its currents
free,
Belike a sun which warms to life a frozen arctic
sea.

I thank Thee for the crucible that cleansed my
heart of lust,
For the chastening that curbed my pride and
reined my heart to trust,
For the threshing-flail that spared the grain and
purged the futile dust.

I thank Thee that in my distress, O Lord, Thou
didst draw near
And by Thy love didst crucify the body of my fear,
And pressedst to my lips the cup of solace warm
and clear.

I thank Thee for the brunt of pain which central-
ized my hope
And made me walk with open eye where purblind
worldlings grope
And view the shining city that dwells beyond the
arduous slope.

I thank Thee for Thy gentleness which stays my
mind in faith,
That anchors me in quietness when the world's fair
wind delayeth
And hangs before my waiting gaze the bright pole-
star of death.

SHARDS

THERE are cynical spirits who cast away
Like useless potsherds of human clay

 The pitiful shards of the spirits of men;
But the broken pieces the Potter regards,
And naught but the valueless discards

 When He fashions His shattered vessels again.

He will mould them again on His intricate wheel;
The press of His fingers each fragment shall feel;

 The flexible clay shall be shaped by His hands;
Vessels faultless shall rise from the shards,
And each vase shall rest where an angel guards

 In the House where God's handicraft forever
 stands.

BOY GALAHAD

I ASKED of Christ the King a royal gift:
He sent to me a brave and noble lad
Whose form broke like a ray through heaven's
rift;
Fair was the face and pure of my Boy Galahad.

His mind was fresh and clear as August skies;
Brave was his heart and clean and glad;
His body it was formed for gallant errandries;
Chaste, strong and gentle was my Galahad.

Strength, reverence and poise met in his face,
And ardor welded firm the brave triad;
Decision fused with beauty in his grace
And courage with the sweetness of a lad.

Companions true and gallant my young Crusader
had,
(Fired for adventure were the souls of them),
But bravelier than they fared forth my Galahad
To seek the jasper-citadeled Jerusalem.

Sometimes I think I see him beneath the astral
lights
In shining mail of star-spun linen clad,
Standing amid Christ's pledged and loyal knights
Who guard the portals of the white Hyads.

TELEMACHUS

THOU thoughtest, sturdy monk, on that rude day
Thou laidest down thy fervent life to stay
The Colosseum's homicidal play,

Thrusting thy breast between the combatants,
That by thy life thou might'st stem the advance
Of Rome's insane and brutal militance.

Rome's amphitheatre seemed not to thee
A direful spectacle, for thou couldst see
Beyond its insolence and cruelty,
Beyond its pride and garish pageantry,

Beyond its fury, armed with pagan curse,
Beyond its anger, flamed to wreak its worst,
That thy arena was the universe.

Tier upon tier, intent, innumerable,
Thou sawest the multitude invisible
Who throng that theatre imperial;

Upon its highest seat, Christ, Emperor,
Thy Judge behind the heaven's eternal bar,
Thy Witness and thy faithful Arbiter;

And crowding round the throne of Christ the
Lord,
As clouds surround a star, with one accord
The heavenly host echoing their Master's word,
Till Rome's mad shouts seemed but a faint discord,

A transitory murmur in the sea
Of cries celestial that applauded thee,—
Scarce audible amidst that symphony.

As thunderous breakers born of mighty seas
Submerge the puny waves along the lees,
Their shouts drowned Rome's derisive blasphemies.

Honorius' power seemed a little thing
Against the form of thy majestic King,
Who smiled upon thy virile offering.

The angry crowd seemed but a paltry blot —
(A blur against a sky, seen and forgot)—
Against that multitude whom they saw not.

The senators, the knights, the populace,
Nor the malevolence of the human race
Could mark one line of terror on thy face,
Nor move thee from thy sacrificial place.

Thy King Eternal, had He not felt the might
Of human hate, of evil gripped with right,
And died for thee in dark Golgotha's night?

Had He not tasted Calvary's bitterness
To cleanse away mankind's dark sinfulness?
And wouldst thou be content to suffer less?

Thou sawest those whom Caracalla slew ;
Nero's strong martyrs, to their Master true ;
And mightier still and still far mightier grew
The host who flashed on thine exalted view :

The tortured, exiled, hunted, crucified
Who walked through blood to their Redeemer's
side ;

Wouldst thou refuse to die as they had died
Upon this altar their blood sanctified?

'Twas done: a howl of rage, a rush of stones ;
Thy body in the arena's red soil sown ;
Thine eagle spirit like the martyrs' flown
To stand beside thy King's eternal throne ;

To stand amidst that vast, imperial throng
And join its infinite, immortal song ;
Thy body left behind thee, crushed, but strong
To check the brutal world's wild waste of wrong.

The crowd infuriate had wreaked their worst ;
As died their mad, malignant curse,
Thou wast crowned victor in the Universe.

Rome's cruelty was drift before the flood
That issued from thy sacrificial blood ;
As some great stream springs from a paltry clod,
Thy blood o'erflowed the Colosseum's sod
And like a torrent lifted men to God.

PAUL, MAKER OF TENTS

WHEN I was a lad in Tarsus long ago
My father taught me the tent-maker's trade;
Beneath my hands I watched the coarse cilicium
grow,
And many a herdsman's sturdy tent I made.
Men praised their texture and their shelter wide
A few brief years, then cast them worn aside;
Along the Roman roadways one by one they de-
cayed.

When I was a slave of Jesus long ago
I followed hard the trade my Master taught;
He guided me with hands of skill, and lo!
The skies could not contain the tent of truth I
wrought;
Its folds pavilioned all the race and mightily
it grew;
Millions who strayed in error found its protec-
tion true,
And homeless generations its liberal shelter
sought.

When I was a slave of Jesus long ago
Following my Master's trade diligent years I
spent;
It was beneath his tutelage, I know,
I fashioned this imperishable tent;
I wrought the work which Christ the Lord de-
signed;
Perfect and ample for all humankind,
It canopies humanity like the broad firmament.

FIRELIGHT AT NAZARETH

O LITTLE Lad of Nazareth,
Thou sittest with Mary beside the hearth alone;
Then Joseph comes to fire the clean, gray stone,
And twilight gathereth.

O Little Lad of Nazareth,
Thou watchest silently the shapes the fire assumes;
The light which filled Thy Father's many rooms
About Thee lingereth.

O Little Lad of Nazareth,
The Garden's torches quiver on Thy lips,
And dark Golgotha's dread noonday eclipse
Thy figure shadoweth.

O Little Lad of Nazareth,
Thy face is like a star which holds the tides,
And all the wide world's warm firesides
Thy heart encompasseth.

O Little Lad of Nazareth,
The world is wide, but all its hearths are Thine:
Wherever children's fire-lit faces shine
Thy child's heart answereth.

RANDOM LINES FOR A BOY'S PORTRAIT

SEVEN buoyant springtimes pulse exultant
through his veins;

Seven summer suns, seven equinoctial rains;
Seven autumn winds, seven sere autumnal woods;
Seven winter snows, seven merry winter moods. . . .

His mouth, it is a highway for a thousand boyish
smiles;

('Tis arched with brightest scarlet and 'tis walled
with purest white);

And they come like artless troubadours along the
gay defiles,

Trooping, bandying, meeting, parting with tumultuous
delight. . . .

His eyes, they are two crucibles, uplit by ambient
fires;

They smoulder gray, they sparkle blue, they flame
with swift desires;

Caresses, dreams and tales and play and tears and
hopes and prayer

Into one luminous, liquid gray have all been melted
there.

Sometimes they flash like fireflies through hot,
impulsive tears,

With the phosphorescent poignance of swift and
sudden fears;

But like the constellations against the sobbing sky,
They shine full cavalierly when the rains blow by;

And no shade of sadness dulls them nor pensive
glancing mars
When they twinkle in the firelight like the little
dancing stars. . . .

His hair, it is a flaxen net to snare the blithe sun-
beams
Which paint the wildwood flowers and nest o'er
silver streams;
Their throats vibrate with color, the light strikes
through their wings;
Their down is soft and filmy, their plumes are clean
and fair,
And they beat their wings but lightly against his
yellow hair. . . .

Slender is he and spirited, agile of body and mind,
Alert, incautious, impulsive and bold as the will
of the wind;
He courts an adventure, a quest, and kindles the
timidly-faring
By some boyish power expressed in the modest
pride of his bearing.
His limbs are potentially strong, mobile, respon-
sive, elastic,—
A boy's body, sinewy, brave, a child's body, plia-
ble, plastic.

The chastened light on his forehead, the chivalric
lines of his mouth
Declare all the pride and decision and will of the
Cavalier South;

The wood is a chum with him and a comrade he
with the wood,
And he and the wood form a kind of hardy brother-
hood;
He shares with the wilds their graces and cleanly
energy:
Instinctively his muscles seize
The rhythm of the cadent trees;
His eyes are soft with dreams that rise
Only toward near, familiar skies;
And merrily his frank face yields
A flushed response to the ruddy fields. . . .

At evening when the lights burn low, he kneels be-
side his bed
And speaks in simple language his honest boyish
prayer;
God's candles seem to burn about his covered head,
And God's regarding angels stand reverently
there. . . .

And then upon the ebb-tide of dreams he swiftly
slips —
The shallow sea, the fallow sea that floats the chil-
dren's ships —
Its distant, drowsy breakers breathe faintly on his
lips.

MY HOME

THE sky which roofs my house is thatched with
sapphire sedge;
Beyond my garden wall a wide plateau extends;
My cottage grounds enclose an ample acreage;
And I have rooms enough for all my friends.

My gardener crops close the stars which form my
hedge
And scythes the suns that gambol o'er my lawn;
Fountains of sparkling planets o'erflow my garden's edge
And comets leap my terraces like frightened
fawns.

The lanterns in my rafters burn gustily and red
And light my genial rooms by day and night;
They fill the attic spaces that amble overhead
And cheer my household heart with friendly light.

When fears the open harbor of my heart invade
Like flying fleets of squadron-hunted foam,
In quietness of spirit I dwell, and unafraid,
Within this pleasant universe, my home.

LAKESIDE VESPER

LORD of this lake whose presence stirs
The hearts of Thy true worshippers,
We join the awed waves' litany
And lift our reverent prayers to Thee.

Lord of this lake, Whose skilful hands
Have moulded these elastic sands,
Who fashioned this instable beach
Into Thine instrument of speech:

Our flesh to discipline inure,
Chasten our lusts, our strength secure,
Our wayward bodies consecrate
Into Thy voice articulate.

Lord of the lake whose misty prayers
Ascend the deep sky's temple stairs,
Whose intercessions, prayed in pain,
Return to earth in fertile rain:

May our petitions rise to Thee
Drawn by Thy fervent sympathy,
Then fall in showers multiplied
To drench the soils of human pride.

Lord of this lake whose offspring streams
Along the thirsty channels gleam,
May our spirits reënforce
Humanity's parched watercourse.

Lord of this lake, Who walled its tents
With living forests of defense:
Surround our frail inconstancy
With walls of clean vitality.

Lord of this lake whose water floats
This fleet of simply-fashioned boats,
Whose buoyant bosom upholds well
Its weight of crew and caravel:

May Thy great Spirit buoy high
Our voyaging humanity,
Bear to their wharves each straining crew
And lift the errant flotsam, too.

Lord of this lake whose solitudes
House many strange and vagrant moods;
Whose devious shores and basined slopes
Breed incommunicable hopes;

Whose musing words and whispered fears
Eddy among these harried piers;
Whose modulated lips give vent
To bursts of fear incontinent;

Beneath whose chills and passion heats
A pulse of healthy vigor beats;
Whose vagaries are but the froth
Upon the pure heart's fervid broth:

Our fluctuant passions stabilize ;
Our wills with Thy will harmonize ;
Forgive our wilful errancies ;
Pardon our infidelities.

The tempers of our hearts restrain ;
Our flaccid flesh and mind sustain ;
Our boasting arrogance suppress ;
Give us Thy robust tenderness.

Make our minds pliant to Thy voice ;
Infuse us with Thy equipoise ;
The errors of our thoughts subdue
And our exhausting wills renew.

Lord of this lake whose form is pressed
Against the evening's mother breast :
When slumbers come to set us free,
Grant us to fall asleep on Thee.

In rest renewing let us lie,
Our faces mirroring the sky ;
Beneath the sunrise let us wake,
Clothed in the beauty of the lake.

AN INN

I HAVE built me a house of the lumber of dreams,
 Columned and gabled and fair;
From the forests of fancy I brought its beams,
 And I plumbed its walls foursquare;
Like a disembodied palace seems
 My Castle-in-the-Air.

It is furnished with rosewood fantasies
 And spectral earthenware,
With immaterial tapestries
 And heirlooms of old care;
Subtle phantasmal images
 People its shadowy stair.

It is lodged by figments of my wit,
 A motley fiction host;
Illusive spirits tenant it,
 In phantom tasks engrossed;
Behind the desk silent I sit,
 An eerie landlord ghost.

TAMPA

LAST night as I walked in the moonlight,
And its kisses revived the faint air,
And the dewy-browed breezes were parting,
And whispering good-nights low and fair,

Then methought, Would that I were the moonlight
To caress the dark shadows for thee,
Or the migrant and mystical night-winds
To woo thee to dreams and to me.

TALLAHASSEE

THERE'S a maiden I know in the Land of the
Sun,
Midst the hills of my fair Tallahassee,
Whom to know is to love, with a loving past
speech —
My bright-eyed, my rare Southern lassie.

Her hair is more bright than the orange tree's
bloom,
And her blush than the red sun's appearing,
And her laugh is as brave and as reckless and
free
As the Mexican Gulf's wild careering.

But better than all, she's a heart of pure gold,
Has my maiden of fair Tallahassee,
And she loves me for all that her golden heart's
worth,
Does my sweet-heart, my rare Southern lassie.

GIFTS

ARE you weary of the turgid, languid faces?
Are you hungry for a face which satisfies?
Bare your head beneath the starry spaces,
Lift your spirit to the margeless skies.

Cry you for a hand-clasp that will thrill and
linger?

Grip you with God's patriarchal soil:
Granite wrist and oaken palm and finger,
Rugged hands rewarding those who toil.

Duller burns your youthful vision ever?
Are you to your wounds unreconciled?
Fruitless seem your longing and endeavor?
Throw your arms about a little child.

Are you weary of the lusting and the sinning?
Cringe you underneath the baffling rod?
Seems the ending less than the beginning?
Throw yourself into the arms of God.

“ MANY ROOMS ”

A THOUSAND blazing chandeliers
Hung with ten thousand flaming worlds
Are but as flickering candles to illumine
The steps of the Invisible
Amidst the awful corridors of space.
That vast domain we see above
Is but a humble chamber of the house
Where God's eternity holds sway;
Beyond the wildest winging of man's mind
God's worlds lie on and on and on
And lighten up the lonely halls
Where only He has trod,
His way but then begun
Out toward the terraced wastes beyond
Which overlook the silent plains
Whose sweep is infinite.

VEILS

THE dawn lifts clouds of vapor o'er the skies
Like virgins who draw veils across their eyes.

The seas draw folds of foam across their brows
Like veils that drape a young bride breathing
vows.

The wind draws sheets of rain across the sun
Like hoods of linen which disguise a nun.

The storm-cloud hides herself in sodden rags
Like tattered garments worn by prideless hags.

Gauzes of air enswathe the sleeping earth
Like vestments thrown about a child at birth.

Heather the hills about their shoulders fling
Like purple mantles which invest a king.

White films of mist blow round the river's face
Like vestures which betray a maiden's grace.

The night draws shrouds of darkness round her
head
Like cloths of velvet which enfold the dead.

MY LAWNS

THE lawns which lave my door
Are like two inland seas,
Dotted from shore to shore
With poppy Cyclades.

O'er myriad scarab-miles
Along the limpid seas
Skirting the swaying isles
Waft insect Argosies.

In ports of moss and fern
The bees at anchor pause;
Like reefs of lightning burn
Their sails of glowing gauze.

The stout cicadæ spurn
The guileful moth mermaids;
The stormiest seas they turn,
Doughty and unafraid.

The locust trawlers brave
The perils of the night,
Trusting the yielding wave
And the glow-worm channel-lights.

The terrors of the sky
The firefly squadrons dare;
Like fleets of fire they fly,
Winged navies of the air.

The swift ant-dories hive
Among the harbor wharves ;
The shipyards are alive
With skilful caddice larvae.

The spider fisher folk
Hang their thick-woven nets
Upon the reefs that choke
The narrow-walled inlets.

The viking hornets boast
Their lusty piracies ;
They loot the craven coast
And raid the open seas.

The fragrant east wind drifts
From archipelagoes
And promontory cliffs
Of heliotrope and rose.

Within the south wind's wake
The grassy ocean rolls ;
The emerald billows break
Upon the pansy shoals.

By violet surfs caressed,
Circled by idle seas,
Glow 'gainst the scarlet west
The rose Hesperides.

Across the open lawn
My faring spirit flees,
Sailing from dawn to dawn
Upon my inland seas.

CRESCENT OR STAR?

I

THE crescent cleaves the sky,
A gleaming scimitar blade,
Dripping with blood-red stars,
Dented with battle-scars,
With cratered fires inlaid.

“ Great Allah, God of changeless light,
To whom our faithful prayers aspire,
Who guidedst Thy true Prophet’s flight
By circling souls of smokeless fire,
Whose angel messengers traverse
This mighty mosque, Thy universe:

“ Great Allah, God in whom we trust,
Thou art supreme and only Thou;
We purify our souls with dust
And yield to Thee our Moslem vow;
Grant us the shock of arms in death
And heaven through our holy faith.

“ Great Allah, Thou who didst create
Mahomet Warrior-Prince of all,
Thou whose decrees predestinate
The chosen who in battle fall:
Grant that our swords may teach all men
The virtue of the Saracen.

“Great Allah, by Thy warrior’s face
Our waiting hearts embolden ;
Help us to keep our awful place
From Christian hordes withholden ;
To crown amidst a conquered race
Mecca the fair and golden ;
Then shall each rival Olivet
Wear Islam’s sacred minaret.”

II

The sun possesses the sky ;
Lo ! the dominant star !
Antagonist of night,
Fountain of limitless light
Flinging its torrent afar !

“Jehovah, whose Shekinah dwells
Within each star which Thou hast made,
Thou whose eternal life upwells
Through constellation and through blade :
Upon this earth, Thy altar stone,
We worship Thee, our God, alone.

“Jehovah, who didst stamp on man
The image of Thine august face,
Whose mercies, like the planet’s span,
The hosts of humankind embrace :
Our flesh, our minds, our will control ;
Grant us Thy dignity of soul.

“ Jehovah, who didst condescend
To live in our humanity,
Whose Son Eternal Thou didst send
From Bethlehem to Calvary :
Teach us, by His life sacrificed,
They humanness revealed in Christ.

“ Jehovah, by Thy father’s face
Our latent wills discover ;
Help us to make this recreant race
Thy reverential lover ;
Erect in every human place
Jerusalem, our mother ;
Wherever hearts are filial, grant to them
The freedom of Thy New Jerusalem.”

TIDES

I

THE arching skies are gayly scrolled
At morning-tide.

The cup of day is lightly-bowled,
The sun lifts high its lamp of gold,
The friar stars their vigils hold
At morning-tide, at morning-tide.

The freshet streams of youth are bold
At morning-tide.

The fords of pain are shallow-shoaled,
The stems of peace are velvet-bolled,
The plains of faith are gently-knolled
At morning-tide, at morning-tide.

II

The pageant of the day retires
At eventide.

The sun discards its torrid fires,
The sea, a sleeping child, respire,
The grave groves strike their sober lyres
At eventide, at eventide.

The graying day of life expires
At eventide.

The passions lose their poignant briers,
And hopes assemble their vast choirs
Beneath the glowing sunset spires,
While faith to uplands far aspires
At eventide, at eventide.

GRAVES WHICH APPEAR NOT

YE who repeat your vacuous prayers,
And piously climb heaven's chancel stairs,
While your life belies what your smug voice saith :
You are dumb with greed ; your worship bears
The infidel burden of your wares
And the lust of your canting soul betrayeth ;
Greed is the god which your heart obeyeth ;
Your trust in trade is the sum of your faith.

Ye who recite your slicken creeds
And pipe your praises on flatulent reeds,
While you tramp o'er the souls of men, harsh-
shod :
Define your faith in generous deeds ;
Rephrase your text in answered needs ;
Tread softly the roadway your Lord Christ trod,
The highway of human hearts, paved with blood,
Which leads to the hospitable House of God.

INDIAN SUMMER

THE autumn days are angling
Along the mountainsides ;
Their fishing boats are spangling
The summer's ebbing tide.

They trawl for pines and birches
And elms of glowing red,
And trap the silver fir trees
Which lift their facile heads.

With filmy nets and airy
They drag the deeper main,
Tangling the dales abyssal
Within their misty seine :

Shoals of darting fountains
And elms of scarlet fins,
And massive dolphin mountains,
And hill leviathans.

Their nets are light as vapor
And thin as azure smoke,
But they mesh the gurnard thistle
And bind the sturgeon oak.

THE CHARIOTEERS

THE million white hoofs
Of the rain on the roofs
Race from gable to tower ;
With cries on their lips
The winds crack their whips
Over the steeds of the shower.

Spurring their pace
To riotous race,
They dash o'er the eaves' precipice ;
Their chariot wheels
Splinter and reel
And leap to the garden's abyss.

The chariots crash
With a phosphorus-flash
On the stones of the garden's pavement ;
And the shadows bind
The driver-winds
In chains of secure enslavement.

THE MOLLUSK MOON

BEYOND Orion's jettied bars

Or the foam-frayed Milky Way
Lies a vaster sea, where the waves are stars,
And the blue-shelled planets stray;

The blue-shelled mollusks which drift with the tide,
Each clasping its singular pearl,
Seeking behind its gray mantle to hide
That its bosom imprisons a world.

A high wind blew on the sea one day
Out from the broad sky lands;
The sea-shells were tossed like the flying spray
And washed on the coastwise sands.

They were beached on solar peninsulas,
And tossed upon asteroid dunes,
Driven among the fluctuant stars,
And anchored in stellar lagoons;
Meshed in star-flung nebular nets,
And stranded in far inlets.

One amethyst shell was caught in the swirl,
And driven inland afar;
Its mantle was rent, and it lost its pearl
Which men call the Great North Star.

It lost its pearl, but it drifted on,
Caught in a crystal firth,
Till it rested lightly one topaz dawn
On the white-reefed headlands of earth.

Rose-red and silver it glows by night,
By daylight transparently blue;
It is clean as a comet's lavender light
Or a violet drop of dew.

And sometimes I think that the mollusk moon
As a sea-shell murmurs and sings
And thunders its mother-sea's turbulent tune
And vibrates with echoings

From beyond Orion's jettied bars
And the foam-frayed Milky Way
Where the sea is vast and the waves are stars
And the blue-shelled planets stray.

SYNTHESES

THE souls of nations are like metals, solid
And stern, rigid, impervious. Aloof
From contact with the acid world they hold
Their mass hard and intact. But as the chemist
Who plunges into his retort a bar
Of callous metal, and amazed beholds
The acid and its foe foaming with rage
And grappling in hot antagonisms, atom
With atom clenched in torrid embroilments:
So when the chemist, who controls the baser
Elements of human life, immerses
Britain's inflexible pride within the flood
Of Teuton jealousy acidulous,
Or Russian greed within the adolescent East's
Fractious and immature virility,—
Passion with passion grips in raw antipathies
And earth becomes one vast retort, ensurged
With warring ferments of distrust and hate,
Or like some ghoulis laboratory wherein
A madman, drunk and imbecile, projects
His fiendish orgy of experiments,
Glutting his brain with feverish essays,
Combining gas with hostile gas, inciting
Explosives into brute deliriums,
Embroiling elements inimical
In struggles and reactions multiple;
Engaging British insolence, German lust,
Gælic disdain and Celtic chauvinism,
Inchoate Slavic puissance, Servian ire,
Saracen arrogance, Austrian pride,

And the revengeful wrath of Italy
In combinations irremediable;
Releasing countless racial prejudices —
Erstwhile repressed and chained in mock abey-
 ance —
Which rush into their foemen's mad embrace
And lock in marriages delirious,
Till God alone, the Omniscient Analyst,
May disengage the alien elements
Wedlocked in such dissentious syntheses.

WONDER AND PRAISE

My heart o'erbrims with wonderment
When I behold a sleeping child ;
The foliage of a forest-wild ;
The shorn breast of a storm forspent ;
The pinions of a falcon-cloud ;
A brooding mountain, basalt-browed ;
A soiled virgin, penitent ;
An enfilade of slanting hail ;
The flashing of a sun-washed sail ;
A fledgling heron's crude essays ;
The ocean's free, unfettered ways.
As stirs the blade within the prison-clod,
Then fills its narrow cells with songs to God,
My wonder leaps to life in praise.

THE CRUISER

I THINK of all the squadrons
Which patrol the Ether Seas
That the Solar Fleet is bravest
In her shining panoplies.

Following the flag-ship Saturn
(With her blazoned pennon-rings),
Not a ship lags, shot and slattern,
Through the bold Fleet's wanderings ;

Jupiter in weltering glory,
Venus, Uranus and Mars,
Annalling in stellar story
Their immortal Trafalgars.

Through fair augury, through black omen
Rides the gallant Solar Fleet ;
She has never bowed to foeman,
She has never owned defeat.

And I think this cruiser planet
Is the trimmest of the Fleet,
With the human race to man it,
Mailed and turreted complete.

Guns electric, guns volcanic
Have been mounted on her deck ;
Thundering echoes oceanic
Detonate along her trek.

In the open, never harboured,
Tossing by land's harbourage,
Sea to larboard, sea to starboard,
And above, the sky's harsh rage;

Gold for cargo, iron to sheathe her,
Cloud for cordage, storm for sail,
Draws a million leagues of ether,
Breasts the universal gale.

Oh! a cruiser is this planet;
Funnel-rim to deepest keel,
She is ribbed with beams of granite,
And her towers hold like steel.

Should the Fleet, in shattered splendor,
Imminent disaster meet,
Hers shall be the last surrender,
She shall triumph in defeat.

THE ARMY SURGEON

I AM haggard with the burden of these slain ;
My spirit staggers underneath the maddening
load ;
This path I climb like wild Vesuvius' fiery road
Is paved with searing ashes of men's pain.

My eyes are like to morgues where dead men lie,
Countless bodies rotting in an endless row ;
Their limbs fester like dunghills, no thrill their
foul nerves know,
While their putrid faces mock the placid sky.

My ears are like to tombs where a nation's groans
converge ;
The curses of the wounded frothed upon war's tide
And the hoarse echoes of sorrow from innumera-
ble firesides
Blast my heart with their intolerable dirge.

My nostrils are like wolves insane with rancid
blood ;
The sweet French winds are nauseous with the
loathsome stench
Of noxious human nightshades that clot the red-
soiled trench
And glut my native streams with rank, putrescent
floods.

Like a forest of fair trees my people stood,
Beauteous as the timbered hills of brave Argonne,
Lithe, impregnable and broad to look upon,
And rugged as a grove of Breton wood.

When a tree was struck to earth by guilty stealth
Or by the craftier blades of insidious disease,
As a scientist who grafts his stricken trees
I restored them to their vigor and rough health.

But when war swept like a hellish forest-fire
With enflaming flame my brave and stalwart
 France,
My puny hands could not withstand that demon-
 ish advance
Or wrest these human fagots from the consuming
 pyre.

The forest-streams choke with the quivering,
 charred débris
Of human forms and overflow with blood their
 banks;
The fires of death and pain consume my nation's
 ranks;
Their shattered limbs go roaring to the sea.

God of all men, 'tis man, not Thou, art pitiless;
Forgive this impious waste, attend these speech-
 less slain;
Man's blasphemies and inhumanities restrain,
And resurrect again this human wilderness.

THE VOLCANO

THE guises of restraint and poise which mask
The naked passions of the souls of men
Whose wills and tempers God hath moulded not,
Are comely and ephemerical as are
The damask vineyards and purple-flowered veils
That clothe Vesuvius' fiery nakedness:
But strip convention's semblances away,
Rive the deceptive crust that hides the heart,
Disrupt the human crater's granite vent,
And you denude the elemental passions,
A kenneled pack of raucous, foaming tempers,
Straining like mastiffs frothing in their chains,
Crowding with vapors rank and igneous breaths
The subterranean fissures of the soul,
Pregnant with crude antipathies, and tense
With harsh destruction to inundate the world.
So flamed men's souls in insensate eruption
When martyred Ferdinand's assassin burst
Humanity's thin-cratered crust and kindled
With swift ignition mankind's volcanic breast.
A shudder, cold and ominous, cinctured the globe,
Subdued and stifled as the paroxysms
Portending planets' geologic travailings,
Premonitory with deep-repressed alarms
And chill with deadly racial presagings.
There was one dizzying moment when mankind
Like some crazed suicide upon a precipice
Choked back its fevered breath, downcast its gaze,
And viewed with glazen eyes the sheer abyss,
Searching those caverns of its undersoul

Where lust and greed on anvils Cyclopean
Are forged, and furnace fires, harshly imprisoned,
Lust for their liberation. Then swift as death
The deep volcano vomited its smoke;
Maudlin hurricanes of black revenge,
Conceived in anger's foul metabolism,
And wrested from its lacerated breast,
Belched from its ruptured apex murkily,
Eructated in malodorous fumes,
And bloody hemorrhages of hate.
The broad sky was engulfed in lurid omens,
And whorling augurings of ruin.
Clouds, black as viscid blood, befogged the heavens,
Till reverent hearts sickened with dread, and men
Grew infidel to see the pure sky's obscuration
And God's calm visage overcast; while others,
Mind and senses heightened by the glare,
Perceived God's lineaments in new effulgence
And burning with a glory unobscured
Within the brilliance of that holocaust.
Then shook the world like Dagon's pillared temple;
Reverberating earthquakes shocked the race,
And sharp convulsions leaped from continent
To continent, while throes portentous rocked
The molten bosom of humanity.
For deep within man's fulminating breast
The savage fires and hot, explosive fumes
Had snapped their fragile leashing. Infuriate,
They clamored to the rent volcano's cone,
Driving before their torrid thongs a stream

Of lava, dust and fire: lava of blood
And vibrant human flesh, wrought in the womb
Of wistful motherhood and moulded fair
By woman's dexterous hands, lava of iron
And blasting lead and barbed electric lash
And phenol dropped like cursed Gomorrha's rain;
Dust of disease and desiccated forms
And shredded nerves and charring cholera
And powder weighed in hell and chloric fumes,
And flames devouring as the tongues of fiends.
So rose the Vesuvian armaments and fell
In blasting rage upon the recoiling world.
On Belgrade's citadel first it fell,
But like an Alpine cataract it plunged,
Tossing the boundaries of nations by
As torrents brush away the webs of insects.
The adamantine fortresses designed
By machinating engineers and kings,
Bulwarks of boundary and stone, availed
As crumbling dikes avail when Oceans drive
Their hungry Armadas of tidal waves
Against the frail obstructions reared by man.
Nor Namur's stern defenses, nor spires of Rheims,
Nor hillocked France, nor campus of Louvain,
Nor cradled homes of gentle Gascony,
Nor bronzed Carpathian bulwarks, nor Yser's
stream,
Nor Yarmouth's crescent harbour, marble-
crowned,
Nor Tsing-tao's frowning forehead, haired with
guns,
Nor Gallipoli's hills, nor Ægean walls,

Nor mired Mazurian lakes, nor Afric marsh,
Nor war-scarred coast of Cæsar's Italy,
Nor breasted Baltic waves, nor aged Calais,
Nor troughed and channeled sky, nor turgid sea,
Nor wild primeval ranges, could withstand
That avalanche of flesh and steel and fire.
It rioted through turbid air and sea
And tracked with incinerating steps the land,
Man's elemental home. In lurid flight
Bowlders of brawny brain and vital thews,
Blazing like massive human meteors, fell
Extinguished in the black Chilean sea.
Flotillas of winged armor, petrel cruisers,
And men-of-war manned by ethereal crews
Breasted the stormy sky and rained destruction,
Sowing their grains of blood and penury
Upon the fertile soils of human souls,
Frighting the plumed sea-fowls from their homes
And cleaving with their prows like craven spume
The choraling lyricists of the air.
The metal cacharidæ of the deep,
Facile in self-control and stealthy thrust,
Drove their stilettos through the quivering breasts
Of scaled and savage iron leviathans
Whose agile turrets swept the volleying deep.
Across the hills and fallow, cringing plains,
Like monsters, inordinately sane, sped
The Centaurs of the crafty scientists,
Reined in with rods of brass and lashed
With maddening cords of stinging lightning-
thongs,
The wrath of Minotaurs within their cells,

The might of beasts within their cylinders,
And in their breasts a cold, inhuman poise,
Spewing their devastating breath, and blighting
The vital fields beneath their ruthless hoofs,
Gutting the soil with fissures, like raw wounds;
And ever, driving all and whelming all,
The vast, incessant surge of human flesh,
Urgent, resurgent, vibrant, passionate,
A far-extending human spectroscope,
Refracting the sulphurous lights of hell
And clotting earth with scarlet stains of blood. . . .

Amidst this wild Vesuvian maelstrom stands
Free-born Columbia. Her earnest face,
Compounded of a woman's yearning faith
And a frontiersman's virile ruggedness,
Fires with a virgin's mystic glow against
The background of that harsh volcanic storm.
Her soul is poised; her mind is undistraught;
A myriad tempered hearts vibrate within
Her breast and nerve her arm. Before the seas
Like aged Canute she sits, a youth, enthroned;
But, by God's will, more puissant, she bids
The advancing tide of flesh and fire recede,
Nor wash with waves of death her peaceful shore.

THE SHALLOP

THE earth is like a shallop
That rides the solar sea,
Her speed a comet's gallop,
Her mainsails broad and free.

She cleaves the silent billows,
And gallantly she rides,
The Queen of All Flotillas,
The Pearl of All the Tides.

No rainbow anchors bind her,
Nor rein her sails of silk;
The waters close behind her
Like spray of foaming milk.

Her pilot boat, *The Crescent*,
Through siren-singing tides
And breakers phosphorescent
Her stately mistress guides.

On many viking cruises
Across the Open Main
Never her course she loses,
Never her harbour gains.

On no calm coast she beaches,
No channel-lights appear,
No friendly port she reaches
Through the Unending Year.

Through flail of storm, through silence,
Through swell and surf empearled,
By shoal and reef and island
Courses the facile World.

She is the wilding shallop
That sails the Shoreless Seas,
Pacing — at comet's gallop —
The Countless Centuries.

THE FOUR AGES

FIRST

My hours like butterflies
 Flicker and flit,
Flutter before my eyes
 Here as I sit
Down from the sunny sky's
 Empty blue pit.

Their wings are orange
 And yellow and white;
Among the red flowers
 They flicker and light;
But when you reach for them,
 They're gone out of sight.

They're gay in the daytime,
 But dark in the night;
I start when I see them —
 My heart beats with fright;
But long before morning
 They're fast on their flight.

See! on the peonies
 One has just lit!
But faster it flies
 Than laughter or wit;
No matter who tries,
 He cannot catch it.

SECOND

My days pass like a cavalcade
Along a lordly esplanade.
In velvet cloaks and gold brocade
And silk the riders are arrayed.
With stormy brow and glittering lance
Some days like armored knights advance ;
Some like fair queens, to gentle staves,
On white palanquins borne by slaves ;
Some come with proud scars on their breasts ;
And some like princely feudal guests,
With white retainers in their train
And retinues of hail and rain ;
As those who come home from the wars,
Their breasts are spangled with proud stars.
In vivid pageantry they pass
From Michaelmas to Michaelmas.
The nights in armor black arrayed,
Like lords fresh from their accolade,
Pass by in mute and sombre pride,
Their vassals marching at their side,
Their purple garments broad of hem,
With silver flowers broidered on them.
Some tiptoe by on satin heels ;
Some rumble by on chariot wheels ;
In gallant line the horsemen ride
From Lenten-tide to Lenten-tide.
From out the vivid skies they come,
With flashing flag and pulse of drum ;
Into the lambent skies they go
With merry step and face a-glow.

Triumphantly the cavalcade
Moves down the lordly esplanade.

THIRD

My months march by with martial tread
Like men who tramp to meet the fray;
Through forests uninhabited
And open roads they make their way.
Their eyes are clear and resolute,
Shadowed by no illusionment;
Nor garrulous nor morbid-mute,
They go to meet the sure event.
They know the tension of the siege,
The thirst which blood alone may quench,
The battle's shock and mutilage,
The mire and tedium of the trench.
They know the shrapnel's surly stroke,
The barrack's irk — the angry rush,
The scorching fire — the blinding smoke,
The shamble-stalls — the deadly hush.
They know the ardor of the charge,
The tedium of the irksome camp;
Yet straight into the battle's marge,
Strong-willed and firm of step they tramp.
They breast the charge, they scorn retreat
Like sober-passioned volunteers,
And march with strong and steady feet
Forward to join the veteran years.

FOURTH

My years are like a sober caravan:
As desert camels, fleet of foot, they press
Across a country rich and limitless;
And ever as the drivers turn and scan
The region where their journey first began,
They marvel at its wondrous littleness,
They marvel at the turmoil and the stress
That brought them to this wide-extending land.

But, though the plain be so out-flung the eye
Cannot describe it with its measuring-rod,
Nor even dream the mighty orb of it,
Yet on they move to reach the vaster sky
Where stands the holy City built by God
Amidst a land serene and infinite.

A MAN

HIS life was melted in a crucible
Of love and pain and reverent desire:
God the Refiner lit the fervent fire
And heaped the pot with metals to the full.

A sturdy virtue, calm and manly-good;
The poise of age commingled with youth's
mirth;
A child's fresh gladness in the wondrous earth;
The energy of knightly hardihood;

The pliant ore of human kindliness,
And cleanly humour, diamond-faceted;
Earnest decision, warm with life and red;
A boy's candor, a poet's eagerness;

The vital human traits which make a whole
When interfused; all genial temperaments
Of youth and age, of character and sense,
Were fused into one pure and manly soul.

Then the Refiner seized within His hand
The plastic ore with deftness infinite,
And, by the Holy Model, moulded it
Into a gentle, reverent, virile man.

SOUTH OF TAMPA

THE SETTLER'S WIFE

WHEN my house is cleaned and the floors are
swept

From spare front door to spare back step ;
When the dinner is past and the dishes are done,
And the country bakes in the kiln of the sun ;
When the yard is hot as a baker's stove,
And the warm fogs hang on the rack of the grove
Like kitchen towels thrown over a sink :
I sit by the window-sill and think.
The bare pine floor is sticky and wet
With the ooze of its sallow-syrup sweat,
And its odor sickens the air of the room
Like the smell of a cancerous henbane bloom.
Below the withering garden's stile
The Manatee drags like a crocodile ;
His back, nailed over with blistered scales,
Hides a heart that is surly and sluggish and stale ;
He drags his bestial trail away
And sloughs his scales in Tampa Bay.
I breathe the tarry tang of pitch ;
I hear the crickets' monotonous stitch ;
The asthmal flies and nasal gnats
Drone buzzing around the whitewashed slats ;
Above the sands the hot waves rise
With coiled spots swimming in their eyes ;
The pine trees, sultry of face and eye,
Hum their airs with a wearied sigh ;
And the palmettoes that rasp the pines
Stir in the sand with drowsy whines ;

The oaks like imbeciles stand and stare ;
The breezes gasp on the spongy air ;
And the clock ticks weakly on the shelf.
Then I close my eyes and think to myself :
Was this the life that they planned for me
When they dragged me down by the Manatee :
To live in a box of steaming planks
In the oven-fogs of a river's banks,
On a poisoned spit of land, sun-stung,
That licks the sand with its swollen tongue,
And cools its hot and bilious side
On a lazy river's dripping hide :
To seal me under a musty lock,
Till my brain clacks like a driveled clock,
Till my heart is weak for a sight of home
And dry as a rifled honeycomb ?
They tell me that by and by
In a few more years, when the trees stand high,
I can buy a place in town,
As fine as stands in the country round,
With house and lands : — it may be so —
I cannot tell — but this I know :
I'd sell out every foot of land
From Bradentown to Boca Grande,
And every grove in all that range
And truck plantation and Exchange
(With all their glittering yellow load),
If I could walk down Randy's road
And knock at Aunt Dorinda's door —
Play with the children on the floor
At Cousin Hulda's — or could cast
At Ann Jerusha as she passed

(All solemn like her heart was gone),
“How’re you and Angus getting on?”—
Or cry to Bobby (bless his heart!
Dragging by his noisy cart),
“Won’t you run back home and see
If your mother’s going to the sewing-bee?”
I wonder if the neighbors’ wives
Who’ve lived here all or half their lives
Know how my feelings sink and sink
As I sit here alone and think.

THE SETTLER

The men who lived in our town,
They tired of the dismal village round,
So they searched elsewhere what they had not
found.
They tired of the steaming afternoons,
And the lazy town-dogs’ howling tunes,
And the chilblain nights by the winter moons.
The little town buzzed like a fly on a spit,
And like dried fish was the village wit;
And so the men grew tired of it.
Some went to the city to drive its loads;
Some joined the navy to whet its goads;
Some answered the call of the long steel roads.
The city made some and some it slew;
The road healed some and crippled a few;
And the sea swallowed most of those it drew.
(Those who stayed — a scarce half-score —
They dwindled down to three or four
Who shriveled up by the court-house door,
Where the clouds steamed in a scalding sky,

And the bald winds cackled hot and dry,
And the thirsty river muddled by).
Some packed their chattels and the like
And started away on the alkaline hike
That straggled north toward the Klondike:
(Dust and cactus and alkali,
Ice and sleet and a hammered sky,
And winds like sledges to the eye).
Dazed by the gold mine's metal clack,
They floundered away on the treacherous track,
But not one of them ever came back. . . .
The blade of the call was the edge of a knife;
So I packed my goods and I brought my wife
Down here to begin our second life.
The town-folk jested when I went,
And some of them asked me what I meant
To scrawl my papers of banishment.
But I sloughed the dust of the land of drouth,
And I turned my footsteps south and south,
Till I came to the Manatee's manly mouth.
I prospected and I staked my line:
I sifted the soil, and I found my mine
Beside this forest of yellow pine:
A golden prospect under the sun,
Orchards of ore, ton heaped on ton,
Loaded with mountains of bullion.
The men who had answered the claim of the sea
And the city's clamor laughed at me,
Who had buried myself by the Manatee.
But when I hear them jest and chaff,
I simply turn my head and laugh
And look down my gold-mine's open shaft;

I watch the Manatee drawling along;
I dip my oar and it breaks in song;
 I answer the Gulf's tintinnabulous gong;
I sail past the tide-waves' coral keys;
I breathe the winds of the booming seas;
 And I shout to the cypresses on their knees.
And if I weary of the waters' sound,
I drive the sandy country round
 From Sanibel to Bradentown.
I share the sturdy comradeships
Of labor and laughter and manly lips
 And the warm-souled tropic's wholesome grips.
I have found here what I came to find;
Shoulder to shoulder and mind to mind
 I work with a fellowship of my kind;
Where a man stands on his nakedest worth,
And manhood scuttles the claims of birth,
 And an honest man is heir to the earth;
Where a man has a place if he has no pride;
And the laud of his conquest is not denied,
 If he teams with the comrades who toil at his
 side;
Where you stand with a commonwealth of your
 peers,
Hearty, unconscious pioneers,
 The democrats of the strong frontiers. . . .
When my old townsmen jest and chaff,
I look down the country's golden shaft,
 Then I turn my face aside and laugh.

FLORIDA NOCTURNE

SING to me, evening skies ;
Bend with thy lullabies.
Vespers of starlight, ballads of night.
Then till the dawn appears
I will forget my fears,
 Dreaming like thee,
 Starry Way,
 Faraway Land!

Sing to me, morning skies ;
Haste, ere the sun arise,
Matins of morning, lyrics of light.
Then when the day appears
I will forget my fears,
 Dreaming of thee,
 Starry Way,
 Faraway Land!

ECLIPSED

ANOTHER lad's morning has ended,
Blackened in sudden eclipse,
Ere his day's ruddy sun had ascended,
Or the dawn had paled from his lips.

His was a maiden's heart, tender;
His was a boy's heart, brave;
The flush of his morning's fresh splendor
Lightens his uncovered grave.

His was a child's heart, glowing;
His was a man's heart of truth;
Bravely the clean winds were blowing
O'er the easternmost plains of his youth.

None knows his name, but 'tis writ on
His features in morning's fair light
That this was a true son of Britain
Who died for his king and the right.

Another lad's morning has ended,
Blackened in sudden eclipse,
Ere his daybreak with midday had blended,
Or the morning stars dimmed on his lips.

GEMINI AND THE MOTH

SAID the moth to the distant star:

“ If I were a sun like you,
No shadows my brightness would mar,
No darkness my luster subdue.”

Said the star to the crawling moth:

“ The earth is one piece with the sky;
We were cut from the same golden cloth;
You are great, little moth, as I.”

Said the moth to the distant star:

“ But you master a firmament;
Lord of the planets you are,
While my back in this mire is bent.”

Said the star to the crawling moth:

“ God recks not with stature or name;
You a moth? I a star? Be not wroth:
Our warp and woof are the same.”

PEACE

A COTTAGE hearthstone's mellow light
Against a black and wanton night:

A throstle's nest, light and compact,
Poised o'er a brawling cataract:

A soldier's face, pallid and dumb,
Amid a war's delirium:

A sailor's cabin, red and warm,
Beneath a white antarctic storm:

A human heart, strong and content,
Amidst a world's bewilderment.

VOYAGING

OUR lives are shallow boats upon a restive river,
Which ever seek the bugling sea and anchor never.

I

We launch in purling shoals, 'mid bells and twinkling
candles,
And gentle pilots guide our boats along the narrow
channels.

They pilot us along the shores, among the bending
grasses,
They will not trust our little barques out where the
deep tide passes.

II

But swift the channel deepens, the blurring mists
are lifted,
Unveiled we sweep the curving waves, descry where
we have drifted ;

We shoot the foaming rapids, elude each fond deterrent,
And giddily we bend our oars to vault the eddying
current.

The flowing banks are interfused with green and
golden glamour,
For spray-nymphs shade each garish line and still
the noisome clamor.

The gilded crafts swarm thick about, their pennons
blithely blowing,
Till all one vast regatta seems and every wave is
glowing.

III

Then bends the sun and brushes back the glamour,
gay and bridal,
While underneath we feel the sweep of currents
deep and tidal.

We join the sober fleet of men who lift earth's
heavy cargoes,
Who bear the weight of human freight and bend
to life's embargoes;

The fleet of cruisers, merchantmen, freighters and
tugs and barges,
Who ply wherever ports arise and human trade
enlarges;

Who clear the waves of hostile ships, boldly and
without cavil,
Perceive the tangled skein of trade and all its
threads unravel.

IV

And then our sails are slowly furled, our engines
cease their urging,
We view beyond the coastal lights the mighty sea
emerging;

And ever as the main draws near, the white tide-
water sings

Of braver boats beyond the bar and nobler voy-
agings ;

Of high adventures, harbours gained, and gallant-
fashioned islands,

Of liberal continents that pass in broad and stately
silence ;

Of ships whose errand is to take, which never lust
for getting,

Whose glory deepens with the day, nor fades in
purple setting.

WONDER AND PRAYER

My mind subdues to silent awe
When I behold a prophet's face;
The tidal movements of the race;
The arc of infallible law
That spans the Universal Whole;
The anguish of a mother's soul;
Nature in perennial thaw;
The sweep of silent desert sands;
An aged laborer's callous hands;
The sea's innumerable waves;
The stones of immemorial graves.
As kneels the seed upon the altar-sod,
Then blooms in frank appeal to God,
My wonder flowers in instant prayer.

THE BOY AND THE MARINER

“ O IDLE argosies, why do you drift
On the tide of the waveless sky?
Tell me what cargoes your gunwales lift
And what uncharted waters your bowsprits rift,
And what strange isles you pass by.”

The mariner stood silent abaft his ship,
And a singular humor kindled his eye
And broke in a smile on his lip.

“ We sail from no port, no harbors explore,
No cargoes we carry, merchandise, crew ;
We seek no headland nor populous shore,
No magical waters pass through.

“ On a limitless, shadowless, crystalline sea
At the whim of the winds we sail ;
Gaily we dance
On the rhythmic expanse ;
Idle are we
When the air is asleep ;
Buoyant, exhilarate, angered we leap
At the sibilant shout of the gale.

“ Ofttimes we move with the careless flight
Of a boy's midsummer fleet,
Appear like a wraith on the mirror of night,
Dissolve in the pale dawn-heat,
Ignite from fagots of lustreless light,
Consume ere our beams are complete.

“ We are built of the timber of marsh pool and
mist

And gossamer ropes of dew ;
We are forged in shipyards vaster, I wist,
Than those where your artisans hew ;
And our rafters are kissed
With dull amethyst,
Crystal and garnet and blue.

“ And yet we are stronger than vessels of steel :
In storm and in battle we brave the high seas ;
The double-barred arsenals of lightning we
seize ;

We silence the sun
With the blare of our guns ;
The cannonade guts us, side to side,
But still on the fiery wastes we ride,
(Bold are our fleets on the main)
Riven from mast-head to keel,
Till at last overwhelmed,
Disfigured, unrealmed,
We are shattered in wreckage of rain.

“ We gauntlet the Orient poles
Till every bowsprit
Is colored and lit
By the flames of the sunset shoals.
Through the tremulous haze of the moon,
Through the penetrant blaze of the noon,
We sail through the long-lit year ;

Across the clean skies
Of every boy's eyes,
And best when we ride on a tear.

" Ah, yes, in one harbor, forsooth,
We would anchor, loath to depart ;
It is landlocked by smiles
And laughterous isles ;
'Tis the wide, wistful harbor of youth,
The half-sensate harbor of youth,
Which leads to the piers of your heart."

MONTICELLO

A WIDE, brown lane leads men to my gate,
Paved with clay-gold and thistles-of-pine,
Columned in with evergreens, lofty and straight,
And latticed with brushwood and vine.

A cedar tree stands beside my door ;
Cinder-red candle-flies dart through its *green* ;
Purple stars, lit on its branches four,
Cast mistletoe shadows between.

A black, cold stream lags hard by my fence,
Idle and careless of speech ;
Dandles the childish daisies, and thence
Loiters beyond their reach.

Sometimes of strange, vivid cities I dream,
But the dearest picture to me
Is the wide, brown lane, the dallying stream,
And the lights in the cedar tree.

A STONE

THERE stood a youth
Scarce two decades of age
Beneath a shelving ledge.
The warm blood rippled from his heart
And sallied to his finger-tips
And nimble lips
As quivering waves
Which shoal-fish start
Spring outwardly and dart
Until their rhythmic ripples lave
The crimson hulks of ships:
A sturdy lad, i' truth.

His boyish soul
Was like his body young:
He was at home among
All living things whose veins ran strong.
In cell and soul a boy,
He felt the singing joy
Of woodchuck sunning by his hole,
And wilding song of aureole
And nightingale,
And young girls' lyrical farewells,
And swaying bells
Of violet and asphodel
By spring, the bellman, rung.

The patriarchs who tottered by
With limping feet and misty eye;
The legends of antiquity

By epic poet sung ;
The buried battlements of Troy,
Thebe's towers, Damascus' colonnade ;
And venerable forests gray of limb,
Seemed strangely old to him,
And on his heart a sombre burthen laid.

His agile fingers moved
Along the sheltered clay,
When suddenly he felt the touch
Within the soil he grooved
Of a sharp boulder hid from sight,
From which by dint
Of pressure light
A little stone he broke
Of rhyolite,
Small, crystal-gemmed and bright ;
He marveled at its glint,
Under the cavern light,
When suddenly it spoke :

“ Twelve million years or more I've lain
Within this mountain's stagnant vein,
Bound in the dismal peonage
Of one who languors in a cage
Black, windowless and stark as slime,
And thinks of that exultant time
When on a white and whirling dawn
Innumerable years ago
The infant Earth, which long had slept
Within its cradle, woke and crept
To the white divan whereupon,

Pallid, reclined his mother-sun,
And pressed his rosy face in vow
Against his mother's burning brow:
(When he kissed her on the lips,
The men of Sirius cried, "Eclipse!")
Then leaving on her drooping hand
A curl from his fair forehead, ran,
A baby planet, clear of eye,
Toddling adown the starry sky,
His body flushed, his face aglow,
His hands and feet as white as snow;
Running with soul and pulse astir,
White-hearted child-adventurer,
To seek among the truant stars
His brothers Jupiter and Mars,
Venus his sister, light of hair,
And Neptune, gay of heart and fair,
And Saturn fleet as airy wings
Rolling his white and scarlet rings,
Who wandered from their mother's tents
To roam the flowered firmaments . . .
For countless years I plunged with joy
Along the hot veins of that boy,
A drop of fiery, fluid blood
Within the planet's veinous flood,
Coursing the tide that surged within
The veins which glowed beneath his skin;
From vein to artery I shot
Vital and passionate and hot,
With gayety and ardor rife
And vivid with the sense of life.

“ But one black day the urge of mirth
Was deadened in the breast of Earth;
Throughout his frame there ran a shock
Which leapt from molten rock to rock ;
A seismic pain his strong lungs smote,
And from his dry volcanic throat
In bloody gusts naught could assuage
There poured a crimson hemorrhage.
Involved within the blood-shot mesh
Of a huge monolith of flesh,
The cavity through which I sped
Tore loose, and volleyed hot and red,
Thrust by the throes which lashed beneath
The ghastly crater’s crumbling teeth,
And in a cloud of pumice whirled
I rose above the sickened world.
Amidst the gray, tempestuous air,
The lightnings and the yellow glare,
My riven body looked upon
The visage of the mother-sun.
I fell ; and in a lava-burst
I felt my petty frame submersed
Beneath a lake of molten gore
That crushed me into bits and bore
My feeble body, bleached of pride,
Into this scaly mountainside. . . .
Throughout the planet’s body wide
I felt the grisly throes subside ;
And through the hard and callous skin
In which I lay a death set in.
Twelve million years or more I died
Within that dreary mountainside ;

For it is death (without its bliss)
To languor in a place like this,
Remembering the ecstasies
Of singing veins and arteries,
The rush of warm and vital blood,
The quiver of the living flood,
And then to perish, knell by knell,
Within a dungeon-prison's cell.
Since this black dungeon bound me fast
Twelve million years have o'er me passed;
The earth has felt the tread of men —
All kingdoms have been born since then;
Your boyish soul, your puerile strength,
Could not conceive the dismal length
Of those millenniums, age on age,
Which held me in their hard bondage;
The stolid echoes o'er my head
(Dead sounds above the buried dead),
Deep, deep below the molten surge
(Like muffled echoes of a dirge),
And I crushed in between the twain
Within this desiccated vein. . . .

“ Twelve million years — then suddenly
A thrill of passion swept through me;
I heard footsteps close by my breast
And 'gainst my side your fingers pressed;
I felt the tomb about me yield:
(Twelve million years? oh, sweet to shield
One's life so long if at their end
One wakes to joy and hope again!)
No other feet had ever come

Through all the long millenniums ;
No feet save yours through earth's long age
Have ever stood beneath this ledge ;
You, lad, who wandered here today
And oped the dungeon where I lay,
Who thought yourself so young of breast,
Who felt no kinship to the past,
Who feared the hoary years,— you first
Of all the ancient universe,
Of all the perished sons of men,
Or creatures that have ever been,
Invaded this sepulchral cave.
My fettered flesh an outcry gave,
A stinging leap ; each straining cell
Rang like a liberated bell ;
Each smouldering ion caught afire
With breaking passion and desire ;
Each atom of the stone you see
Spun in a whirl of ecstasy ;
And when you drew me from the night
Into this cavern's nether-light,
My soul, long chained in stone and bowed,
With exultation sang aloud . . .
Emancipated from my death,
I sense the firmamental breath ;
I seize again the ancient days ;
I see the unremitting rays
(Though purblind from the cavern's gloom)
That burns within the sun's white room.
Her arms which warmed me once I see
Raining caresses upon me ;
Her burning eyes my cold cells fill,

And her pure kisses stir me still.
Draw me from out this sombre cave ;
My crystals in the river lave ;
Lay me upon a hilltop bare
And let me lie in silence there,
Till I shall catch the heaven's beat
And tingle with the pulses sweet
(Like some supernal metronome)
That quiver from my ancient home ;
Till these stark cells, imprisoned long,
Shall sing again their primal song. . . .
You, lad, who thought your ruddy youth
Held life's first mystery and truth :
Your mind refracts the energies
Of all the vast eternities ;
Your wondering life is caught within
The sum of all that there has been ;
You ride a wheel which turned before
The stars their swaddling garments wore ;
Your little spirit floats upon
A stream of life which had begun
Before the sun had given birth
To Jupiter or Mars or Earth ;
You share the metamorphosis
Of an eternal chrysalis ;
Your mind inhales the magic fire
Which all created souls inspire ;
The currents of each heavenly clime,
The spring-tide of eternal time,
Deluge unsought your young tissue
And pour their mighty stream through you.
Your youthful soul and flesh are caught

Upon a web complexly-wrought,
Along whose myriad filaments
The tremors of all past events,
The sounds and awful mysteries
Or dark millennial majesties,
Crowd in, thrilling the vital wire
And kindling your young soul with fire,
Moulding your mind, etching your sense,
Thralling you to all firmaments.
Men gaze with sobered thought upon
The towers of fallen Babylon ;
Their spirits quail with dread and burn
When senile dynasties o'erturn ;
(Beneath these dumb, echoing shales
I heard dull rumours of these tales ;)
Their bosoms like their faces blanch
Before a deadly avalanche
Of energies which undermine
Some tottering throne or crumbling line,
Which mock the patriarchal age
And scorn the claims of lineage :
Alaric battering northern hates
Against proud Rome's degraded gates ;
Napoleon beating kingdoms down
To rifle jewels for his crown ;
Men gape to see the rugged mood
That wreaks its ruthless hardihood
Upon some system which appears
Against a background of gray years. . . .
Well might their spirits be distent,
Well might they stare with wonderment,
Thou young invader of the past,—

Innocuous iconoclast!

To think thy hands availed to move
Along this cold, forbidding groove
A stone which had sustained its place
Millenniums ere the human race
Awoke to shock of hopes and fears,
Unmoved twelve thousand thousand years!
Young mariner, lift up your eyes
Upon the illimitable skies;
With steady hand upon your helm,
Voyage the universal realm;
Embrace your ancient lineage;
Possess your noble heritage;
Your kingdom claim, your birthright seize,—
Young heir of the eternities!"

The youth stood still for awe,
And not a word he spoke;
As clear, untroubled skies
Are vaguely overcast
With mists of hanging rain,
Thoughts o'er his clean eyes broke,
Subduing yet bereft of pain,
A feeling he could not restrain
That he was meshed within the seine
And linked within the immortal chain
Of all the long eternities;
The spirit he had felt so young
By one sheer motion stood among
Earth's far-off infant-hood;
One movement of his hand
Had stirred a stone whence it had stood

Twelve thousand thousand years ;
The shades of æons vast
Fell like deep shadows o'er his face ;
And the illimitable past,—
Hung o'er his body like a cloak,—
Gave him a grave and mystic grace.

LEON

A LEGEND OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

I. LISBON

1410-1435

I SPENT my youth among the docks
That huddle under Lisbon's rocks.

The air was sharp and through my veins
The sharp blood swept like winter rains.

And when the tide piled up at flood
It washed its lust into my blood.

The coarse hands of each vulgar ship
Laid on my heart an iron grip.

The gray hulksides of docking boats
Pulled at my heart and clutched my throat.

I strangled in the landside dust;
The ocean held me by its lust.

I heard the swarthy sailors tell
Of how the sun hissed when it fell;

Of boats whose crews were scalded dead
Within the boiling cauldron red;

Of galleons seized and swallowed up
Inside the fiery-seething cup;

Of monsters, thick of jaw and hip,
Whose bellies could contain a ship.

Like one sucked to a precipice,
So I was overwhelmed by this.

The fogs that tramped in from the sea,
They told a stealthy tale to me:

Of regions wide beyond the main,
Where there was gold and wealth and gain;

Of islands pronged with pointed palms
And steeped in everlasting calms;

Of races wild and copper-skinned
And bold as any Spanish wind.

The sun seemed like a galleon
Whose shouting captain becked me on;

And when he harboured at sunrise
Those golden lands shadowed his eyes.

II. THE VOYAGE

1435

I hired a crew of Genoese:
I purchased them with promises

Of gold and lands beyond the waves
And grandees' wealth and savage slaves.

We lifted anchor at daybreak ;
The pale town melted in our wake ;

The churning ocean crunched the town
And gulped the dingy city down.

We rounded the Belearic isles ;
The white foam scoffed the chafing miles ;

We passed the grim-walled, granite gate
Which guards Gibraltar's sullen Strait.

The winds blew hard and lashed us on :
We swept like gales from dawn to dawn ;

The tempests hissed us with their lips
And lashed us with their corded whips.

Like flimsy rags, above our heads
The mizzen-sails were whipped to shreds.

The lightning shunted through the masts
And wilder foamed the brutal blast.

The mad waves mounted to the sky ;
A puny admiral was I.

The sea the ship had dared to scoff
Trapped us like driftwood in its trough.

The timbers screamed from prow to keel
Like drunken men that cry and reel.

Then died the winds, and suddenly
There fell a calm upon the sea.

For seven weeks we drifted there,
Drugged by the torpid sea and air.

The sea lay numbed and stupefied,
A giant sprawling on his side,

Soaked in a clammy, torrid sweat,
With eyes fish-like and fever-set.

His breath came feverish and hard,
As one's whose lungs are fever-scarred.

A witch's stagnant, tepid broth
Might show no greener scum of froth.

The sky was like a bowl of brass
Clamped down upon a slab of glass.

The sea and sky lay in a swoon,
And midnight was benumbed as noon.

Delirious our senses were:
For days we could not speak or stir.

I ruled upon the quarter-deck,
Like one who rides a rotting wreck.

The fogs besieged us, soul and sense,
Like fetid ghosts of pestilence.

I heard the groans beneath the hatch
Of those whom Death had come to snatch.

Like slough-fish, one by one they died;
We sank them o'er the vessel's side.

III. THE MUTINY

1436

Nine weeks had brought no land to view:
A sullen rage gnawed on the crew.

The gathering hate of grisly storms
I sensed within their skulking forms.

Their hoarse abuse and murmurings
Blackened to threats and mutterings.

They muttered underneath their breath:
“He promised wealth; he pays with death.”

“Kingdoms and slaves his promise was,
And this is all the coin he has.”

Their words like blood were red and thick;
My soul grew feverish and sick.

My chart and arms one day they hid,
And at midnight they mutinied.

My promises — my pleas — were vain;
They bound my feet in iron chains.

They cast me down the vessel's shaft;
Upon the deck above they laughed.

Like bolts wedged in a vessel's plank,
Their curses in my bosom sank.

They cursed me for my avarice,
They scoffed me for my wretchedness.

A sickly wind began to blow;
I heard the stale planks creak below.

I heard the slimy, creeping sea
Glide like a serpent hard by me.

The crew turned round their prow again
And headed for the coast of Spain.

With vengeful oaths and mocking glee
They meted out my fate to me.

"Better that he should starve than we
Should give him sudden death at sea.

"Better to throw him out," they said,
"Upon some foul island's head

"And let him die by inches there
As sharks are strangled in the air."

They tied me on the vessel's rack,
They beat me till my mind grew black.

Strong in their heat of devilish mirth,
They hurled me in an island's surf.

I awoke amid the strangling flood;
The waves about me reeked with blood.

Amidst the breakers' grinding roar
I battled blindly into shore.

Against the east's derisive sun
I saw the melting galleon.

IV. THE ISLAND

1436-1492

I have not seen the eyes of men
Or heard a human voice since then.

Upon the isle I lived alone;
My tongue grew silent as a stone.

The heavens were pitiless and dumb;
I saw the speechless seasons come;

The screaming sea-gulls o'er me soared;
About the coast the hoarse surf roared;

No voice that I could understand
In all the bare and bitter land;

Only the guttural cries of beasts;
The red sun rising in the east;

The white sun leering down at noon,
And the evening sun in lurid swoon.

With never a sign and never a sound
The stolid skies wheeled round and round.

What year I came — how long ago —
I do not care — I cannot know ;

But I was young when I left home,
And now my beard is white like foam ;

My hands are gnarled with age and pain ;
My hair is like a brute's coarse mane ;

Upon this mute and maddening shore —
It seems a thousand years or more.

But never fades the blinding view
Of those wide lands I started to ;

The seasons go — the seasons come —
But like a hot delirium,

Through glaring day and midnight gloom ;
Through gales that girt my isle with spume ;

Through drunken storms that brawl and
rave ;

Through tidal swells that drench my cave ;

Through crouching storm and wrenching
rain: —

It hangs, a nightmare in my brain,

The torture of the old desire
That dragged me by its blinding fire.

V. THE CARAVEL PASSES

1492

Last night I lay beside the grave
That I had digged beneath my cave.

I lay there panting all night through;
Some strange thing haunted me, I knew.

The golden lands beyond the main
Clutched wildly at my heart again.

Through a white glare there seemed to be
A thousand ships upon the sea.

Caught in the vortex of the deep,
I saw a thousand vessels sweep

Like hungry squadrons on the scent
To seek that golden continent.

My thirsty throat began to choke,
When on a sudden I awoke.

The moon was faint and day's first light
Was drenching out the black of night.

My senses, gasping thick, returned;
That vision still within me burned.

I stumbled blindly to the beach,
Too faint for thought, too wild for speech.

I stood upon the outmost shore
Where I had often stood before,

My blurred eyes scouring the main
Which I had searched always in vain.

My eyes were strained, when suddenly
Three sails appeared against the sky,

Crowding the pale horizon's edge
Like eagles beating at their cage;

Their talons in the white waves pressed,
Their pinions straining toward the west.

Their hulks were like to cutlass blades,
And mighty were the strokes they made,

Gashing the ocean's gaping breast
With sweeping strokes from east to west.

I cried till strength for crying failed;
They did not hear — and on they sailed.

I groveled screaming on the beach;
The howling waves drowned out my speech.

The rising sun lit up their masts,
And in a moment they had passed.

A mist swam through my throbbing head;
I fell upon the sand half-dead. . . .

'Tis night again, and I must die,
Between the ocean and the sky;

Far from the sight of Lisbon's docks,
The windy sails, the shelving rocks,

The clamor of her harbour-side,
Her crimson waves at eventide;

Far from the lands I came to find,
Far from the homes of humankind.

Beneath the blank skies wheeling round,
Beside the sea's unceasing sound;

Unburied by the ocean's hands,
My bones will blanch upon these sands.

But I can die with quiet breast;
For ships are sailing toward the west,

With golden masts — and it must be
They seek the lands beyond the sea.

But should they, too, go down in death,
Stay, waves, and hear my dying breath:

Go back and tell the men of Spain
There lies a land beyond the main,

A land majestic and wide,
A golden land for which I died.

THE COAL MINER

A DIALOGUE

COLLOQUII PERSONÆ

A COAL MINER

A PRIEST

A SCIENTIST

A POET

A SAILOR

A HISTORIAN

A SURGEON

A FORESTER

A MORALIST

AN ENGINEER

A NATURALIST

A MUSICIAN

THE COAL MINER

FORESTER

Good morning, honest sir.

MINER

Strangers, good day.

FORESTER

We seek the road which leads to Abington ;
Seven hours we have pressed upon our way
To reach that city ere the racing sun.
Our business urges us ; for if delayed
Upon our course, our mission is unmade.
Are you a native of this town ?

MINER

Yes, sir ;

My fathers have been rooted in this clay
Two hundred years and more. My grandsires
were

Red Royalists before King George's day ;
But when the Revolution fired the land,
First of their townsmen they took the rebel's stand.
Between Yorktown and Sumter they lived here,
Plain, hardy miners, laborers who disdained
Usurpers' heels, who never cowed to fear.
When foemen scourged the State and chained
Our towns with links of fire, our hate they felt ;
They charred our homes ; our spirits none could
melt.

From Appomattox, sirs, my father came,

[221]

Broken, diseased, his home an ashen grave,
In health and fortune impoverished and lame,
A freeman soul manacled like a slave.
But hold, this cannot interest you.

PRIEST

Your home

Is in this village, I suppose?

MINER

Sirs, come

Beyond the shoulder of this hunchback hill;
There is my cottage roof. Two rivers flow
Beneath that ridge and like two women fill
My house with screams and quarrelings.

PRIEST

Lo!

The cassocked sun steps from the vestried east
And sprinkles each hill-top with holy light.
The hooded myrtles kneel; the field-larks stir;
Each breathing creature is God's worshipper.
And see! That crucifix of silver birch!
The burnished copper pine upon that knoll —
(The crowning candelabrum of the church)—
Filling the naves with misty aureole,
Its candles melting into golden-rod,
Its clouds of blue incense upswung to God.
These boulders of basalt and quartz, wild-strewn,
Are vast cathedral steps, meet for St. Paul's;
Yon stones like massive altar-tiles are hewn,
Like white baptismal fonts these waterfalls.

Upon this chancel-cloth of terraced grass
I cross myself ; it is the hour for mass.

POET

I think that yon broad disc, the great sun-glass,
Has gathered up the beauties of all skies
And focused their pure glories on this pass.
How full of loveliness the scene !

NATURALIST

The bright sunrise
Differs from night as seed from gray, dry husk ;
Dawn's youth too soon is sloughed for senile dusk.
This clump of trees like clustered Gothic spires
Indents the crimson sky —

ENGINEER

With bars transverse
Like lofty poles pendant with vibrant wires
Which form the thick cobwebbery of converse
Spun by the spider Trade,—

SAILOR

Or like to masts
Which shuttle through the throbbing ocean's vast
Swift loom to spin the cloth of wealth.

PRIEST

Your trade?

MINER

I am a miner, sir. Deep in the sludge
I hew my livelihood with blast and spade.

Beside my fellow-brutes dumbly I drudge ;
Between thick walls of clammy mire I plod,
An exile from the touch of men and God.
The ruddy sunshine never penetrates
The bleary blackness of our dungeon-shaft.
In cold cells, dark as vaults, my mates
And I breathe stinking damps and poison-
draughts.

Our years are endless weeks : six days in seven
We dig like brutes despised of man and heaven.
I cannot tell you, sir, how that thick night
Deadens our souls. Have you breathed ether
fumes?

Have you heard children whimpering for light?
Inhaled the nauseous airs of ruptured tombs?
Like grimy beasts we drag our brutish backs
Through slime and leave in filthy mud our tracks.
Our days are evil nights of loathsome mires
And gruesome labyrinths without a plan.
We beat our cavern graves, like wild vampires,
Smouldering with morbid thoughts unfit for man.

POET

But, honest friend, deep in the toilsome mine
The friendly constellations ever shine.
We who dwell on earth's surface in the sun
Are blinded by the light. The stars which rout
Your craven night we cannot look upon.
Heaven like an elder brother seeks you out,
Sends down his servant stars, with lanterns lit,
To find you in the coal-mine's sodden pit.
Lift your blurred eyes from their imprisonment

And you will see the emblazoned charioteers
Of Sirius and The Twins in swift descent
Stooping to wheel your soul to lighter spheres.

MINER

The imbecile toad, crawling his foul cell,
Can see Orion's lamps. The damned in hell
Can bridge with sight the burning gulf that runs
Between themselves and heaven. But what avails
To dwell in radiance of unsetting suns
Where stars illume, but inner vision fails?

ENGINEER

You lay the anthracite foundation stones
Upon which nations stand; your strong arm drives
The fulminant steeds which pace the world's broad
zones,
Burdened with freight of gold and human lives.
You whirl the wheels of industry. You slake
The thirst of man for power. Within your wake
Cities grow thick like forestated lands.
You melt the world's ripe ores. The race you
blend
Into compact communities. Your hands
Bind continents and nations' lines extend.
Girders that arch the seas your sinews build
And arid deserts by your might are tilled.

FORESTER

You fell vast carbonaceous forests, aged
Through gray millenniums. Blow on blow
You hack their osseous limbs. Their hot tongues,
caged

Through countless years behind their cold lips,
grow
Livid, and spring to speech in gusts of fire,
Purring like serpents' laughter in the mire.

HISTORIAN

Noble with ancient memories are the planes,
The subterraneous levels of the earth,
Where your tasks lie; along those cryptic lanes
Long-crumbled cities found their splendid birth
And dim and awful deaths.

SURGEON

You tunnel mains
Through Nature's sinuous and recondite veins.
You cut the vascular soil, dissect the clay,
And probe into the planet's hardy frame.
The farmer's harrowing is novice-play;
You make incisions worth a surgeon's name.
Masculine vigor and prepotent strength
Pursue your skill throughout the planet's length.

MORALIST

You fellow with a goodly commonwealth,
The immortal dead whose spirits cannot die.
Heaven's pledge of pure and unexhausting health
Grips you amidst that mighty company.
Man's shallow lusts and flaccid hopes consume
Amidst that silent wilderness of tombs.

PRIEST

The mines you hew are more than sepulchres;
The Christian fathers made the Catacombs

Cathedrals meet for Christ's true worshippers,
Chapels of prayer and consecrated homes.
Among the martyrs' graves the simple choirs
Sang fervent hymns and filled the grotto spires
With noble praise. Cleaving the stubborn ore
You are the architect of a vast crypt
With sculptured domes and silent aisles and doors
Nobly designed and austere altars, stripped
Of the soft pride of St. Sebastian's; the earth
Holds no great temples of more sacred worth.
True work is worship. The men who serve their
race

With reverent intent to serve their King
Convert the meanest sphere into a hallowed place
And serve like priests at holy ministering.
Drudging in silence their dull and raucous ways
They pæan to heaven earth's best-regarded praise.
Their backs, bent to harsh tasks, are bowed in
prayer

That God will serve His subjects through their
toil;

Their grisled breasts and rugged arms they bare
In vow that their inertia shall not foil
His purposes. They are like anchorites
Who inundate the world with wholesome light.

SCIENTIST

You are no menial workman when you gash
The stolid earth. The slightest shock
Of your blunt pick runs like an unseen flash
From quivering stone to sea, from sea to rock,
From rock to star, till all the universe

Shivers with pain. Your lightest blows immerse
All planets in their throes. No dismal grave
For dead souls' burial you dig. From each black
scar

Like rippling fire from ether wave to wave
Your feeblest stroke circles heaven's wildest star,
Reverberates from sky to sky, and frees
Currents which sleep along heaven's dormant seas.

MUSICIAN

The dreary iteration of dull sounds
Falls like a monotone upon your ear,
But like a fleet of facile notes it bounds
Across the skies and anchors at heaven's pier.
The coal-mines which you scorned as vulgar clod
Are viols in the orchestra of God.

MINER

I never dreamed, sirs, that the filthy mines
Held aught but drudgery and hopelessness.
My soul, cramped in those miserable confines,
Seemed like a vermin's. My lips cannot ex-
press,—
For they are awkward and untaught — the leap
My soul has made from that abysmal deep
While you have spoken. You say heaven lights
my cell
With suns? (Well may I walk the mines unshod!)
That those deep shafts which seemed to lead to
hell
Are stairways climbing to the doors of God?
That I am comrade of the holy dead?

That sacred altars crowd about my head?
That I help build the nations? That the piers
Which span the ocean by these hands are placed?
That heaven, sensitive to my labour, hears
My bludgeon pick?

FORESTER

True, friend. Now we must haste
To Abington. Direct us with all speed
Upon our way. Where does this highway lead?

MINER

Follow this road, sirs, and God speed your way;
He brought you here to touch my eyes with sight,
To teach my hard, irreverent lips to pray,
To flash a flaming sun against my night.
Because my eyes are cleansed, my dungeon mine
Shall be transfigured with a light divine.

ALL

Good-day.

MINER

Come, mates. The foreman calls below;
The summons strikes no terror now to me;
In buoyancy of flesh and soul I go;
No prisoner am I; my mind is free;
I am no coward slave lashed by a rod;
I am a freeman laboring with God.

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